

A Shipibo shaman in traditional attire in front of his *pëshëwa* (“hut”). He is wearing a *tari* (“poncho”) dyed with warp-patterned and painted designs, a *moropanan* (“beaded breastplate”), a *moromaite* (“headpiece”) a *moroshëwa* (“choker”), *moroshëta* (“bracelets of beads”), and *isoshëta* (“monkey-teeth bracelets”), and *shinitapón* (“pipe”). San Francisco de Yarinacocha, Perú

PETER G. ROE

The Cosmic Zygote

Cosmology in the Amazon Basin

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To my father, Gerhard E. Roe,
ever indulgent of
his son's predilection for mind games,
I offer one more.

These beliefs are presented in a formal way,
not because [the natives] themselves systematically
formulate dogma, but to show how the anthropologist
can infer a coherent theology from the scattered
explanations of particular items of behavior
which informants give.

—R.F. Salisbury



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Preface

One object of this book is to partially fill an empty niche in the literature on South American mythology and cosmology. In addition to many bodies of primary and secondary texts on regional myths, there have recently emerged some impressive and detailed ethnographic analyses of the myths and world views of specific cultures. Perhaps the best of these are T. Turner's manuscript (1968) on the relation of myth to social organization among the Northern Kayapo of Central Brazil and Weiss's (1975) study of myth and cosmology among the Campa of eastern Peru (Vasquez 1978).

Bridging this intensive delineation of the mythical worlds of individual tribes to a set of related tribes within a specific culture area is Reichel-Dolmatoff's Compelling synthesis of Desana cosmology (19710 and its articulation with Tukano thought generally in the Vaupes region of the northwest Amazon in Colombia (1975). The next progression in the bridge, Levi-Strauss's analysis of mythical themes among many tribes of the South American lowlands (1969, 1973, 1978), leaves a distinct hiatus in the scaffolding. The gap is one between, the specific analysis of myth and cosmos among individual and related groups on the one hand and a highly general comparative analysis of individual themes across a whole set of groups on the other. I intend this study to place a few trusses between these spans by relating the mythological model of specific characters among one tribe, the Shipibo of the Peruvian montana, to a generalized model involving the same mythical figures derived from the South American low-

lands as a whole. This book is not just the obligatory comparative section of an ethnographic analysis that appears after the individual system has been worked our; it is an attempt to do both things at once: to construct a plausible local model and to relate it to a general regional model that will subsume it. I am well aware of the pitfalls involved in such a process and the justifiable skepticism with which it will be met by scholars specialized in the divergent minutiae of local systems. Yet if in its simplified guise this model poses a set of comparative questions that call for the additional rebutting or confirming evidence not available before, it will have served its purpose.

The genesis of this work was complicated. While a graduate student at the university of Illinois taking concentrations in both South American ethnology and archaeology, I was exposed to two formative influences: the work and teaching of R. T. Zuidema, who opened a world of vast and tantalizing complexity in highland Quechua cosmology, and Donald Lathrap's compellingly original efforts, based on his knowledge of Shipibo and related Indian cultures, to relate the iconography of the first monumental art style of South America, Chavin, to tropical forest ecology and mythology.

My earlier training in the graphic and plastic arts led me to study the relationship of the visual arts of present and extinct cultures to their expressions in verbal art, first in my archaeological investigation of the complex Andean representational style, Chavin (Roe 1974), and it's mythical correlates (Roe 1978a), then in my study of the geometric archaeological jungle style, Cumancaya (Raymond, DeBoer, and Roe 1975. Working with Shipibo archaeological assistants on that style I fell under the sway of the beautiful Shipibo art and sought to study it. I first worked with Shipibo oral texts when I began to explore with older Shipibo women the *ani shreati ("*female puberty rit*e")* in an attempt to relate decorated artifacts that were a part of it to similar ones that turned up in the Cumancaya site. As I went deeper into the intricacies of Shipibo oral literature, I began collecting many texts not directly

related to my other ethnographic and archaeographic investigations. I hoped that my recordings of Shipibo myths would lead to some information about the iconographic meanings the Shipibo decorative art style might once have had.

Whatever programmatic reasons I had for studying Shipibo verbal art soon were supplemented by a fascination with the complicated yet earthy symbolism of their tales and the persistent

similarities between them and the larger body of lowland mythology my first and very primitive attempt to synthesize this information began in 1972, when I also began building my comparative file on South American myths. an opportunity to present a long paper at a special symposium on South American myth organized by E. Jean Langdon at the 1978 Annual Meeting of the Northeastern Anthropological Association in Quebec provided the immediate catalyst for me to attack my bulging files and make a preliminary statement. The positive responses of the members of that symposium as well as of others who later reacted to the paper (Roe 1978b) encouraged me to go on. The paper has since been developed into a specific application of the model incorporated in this book to a given body of non-Shipibo texts (Roe 1980b) A minisabbatical in 1978/ 1970 finally resulted in this book.

I would like gratefully to acknowledge the help and influence of all those who contributed to this lengthy process. First let me acknowledge the stimulus of Donald W. Lathrap and R.T. Zuidema for initiating this project, although this does not necessarily mean them would agree with all that is written herein. I also thank the original members of the Quebec symposium- Joan Bamberger, Robert

Carneiro, Waud Karcke, Jean Lapointe, E.Jean Langdon, and Thomas Langdon-for their stimulating example and kind interest in my grapplings with South Amerindian myth. My colleagues who have worked among the Shipibo specifically-Joan Abelove, Roberta Campos, Warren Deboer, and Ronald Weber-have been most generous with their aid, advice, and friendship.

Thanks also go to those specialists and friends who were kind enough to comment on earlier versions of this work; they include: Ricardo Alegria, John Bodley, Gertrude Dole, Lisa Ferguson, Jean Jackson, Kenneth Kensinger, Daniel Levy, Katie Miller, Daryl Miller, Denny Moore, George Schaller, Janet Siskind, David Thomas, and Gerald Weiss. I have tried to incorporate many of their specific criticisms and data in this version, although I hasten to add that I am still responsible for whatever shortcomings it retains. Charles Leslie, as always, has provided a skeptical but supportive intelligence in response to my arguments.

I owe a special debt to Jean-Paul Dumont for initially encouraging me in my attempts at synthesis and to Waud Kracke for his crucial aid in the development of the manuscript and for his generous providing of additional information from the Kagwahiv

that had bearing on the model. Editor Marlie Wasserman has been exceptionally efficient and supportive in shepherding this manuscript to book stage.

Last and with special affection I offer thanks to Manuel and Iba, Jose and Juana, Casimira and Catalino, my madrina Maria, and all my other Shipibo friends of san Francisco de Yarinacocha and elsewhere for their wisdom and help in recording some of their thoughts. May this offering from Quenetsoma be of some aid and comfort to them and their descendants in the perilous future where

myths can form the social armor to keep the Shipibo alive as a people and a culture, making all of us the richer for it.

Both the University of Illinois and the University of Delaware have, through their grants-in-aid programs, made this study possible. Thanks also go to President E. A. Trabant of the University of Delaware for the special discretionary fund he allocated to me for this and related work.

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I



Of Mind Games and Models

My thesis is that, underlying the plethora of recorded myths from the South American tropical forest, there is a basal cosmology built out of animal and other natural symbols. These symbols, if not exactly invariant, nevertheless represent highly clustered sets of meanings. These meanings are in turn based on simple analogy between the equivalences of form, character, or behavior of animals, empirical categories, and humans. The definition of what the animals mean to jungle Indians is essential because these animals are the foils against which people are contrasted, compared, and compounded to define humanity syntactically and to relate its nature to the natural-cultural-supernatural world. What is novel about my approach is the combining of the syntax and semantics of the symbols of South Amerindian mythology to construct a general model that both transcends and includes the cosmologies of any particular group, such as the Shipibo Indians of the Peruvian Montana among whom I have worked and whom I have used here as a reference point.

I am not suggesting that my composite will correspond to the cosmologies of all Amazonian tribes were we to have full information on them. This composite is a series of trend or tendency statements and not a universal generalization. That is, it simply provides the most expectable mythical associations, not a set of invariant archetypes. Rather, this composite is a metacosmology, a system not found in all its detail among any one tribal group, but one that, at a high level of generality might be said to underlie

most Amazonian tribal cosmologies and one from which most of them can be derived in part, if not in whole.

The redundancy of the depiction of the animal characters in the myths of the area suggests to me that individual tribal mythologies represent the partially jumbled facets of a single, and probably partially unconscious, cosmologic model of great abstraction and logical consistency that can explain many hitherto anomalous bits of behavior and fragments of belief. Moreover the logical consistency the model displays is as much metaphorical as it is analytical.[1]

By this I mean that the model utilizes certain figures of speech, such as metaphor, simile, and kenning, to unite the disparate characteristics of human and nonhuman animals to generate a comprehensive worldview. Further, the bewildering number of similar and overlapping animal symbols within the model leads me to assume that there might be some kind of verbal "style cycle" underlying this seeming redundancy.[2] My outline of this theory (below) serves also to define some of the terms I have used in the analysis.

I envision the relationships among sign, symbol, and synonym to be essentially processual. That is, I see the figures of speech in verbal t succeeding one another under the impetus of a demand for novelty in which direct forms of reference are replaced by more and more indirect forms until they end in identity and must be replaced by new terms that lie upon the old meanings. Although somewhat novel, my system is based on Leatherdale's (1974) work on analogy, model, and metaphor and on Rowe's (1967) study of kenning in the verbal and graphic arts. I believe that the forms of verbal art follow a style cycle just like the forms of graphic art do. My system can be outlined as follows:

I. Similarity (that some things look alike to some observers)
   A. Analogy (the relations of part to whole)
      1. Sign (by some perceived intrinsic or "natural" properties)
         a. Metonym (whereby an unmodified segment or aspect of something stands for the whole thing of which it is a part, as in hair for ogre or crown for king)
         b. Simile (whereby something is stated to be like something else that it resembles, as in "its hair is like snakes")
         c. Metaphor (whereby, under the demands of

novelty, a more indirect reference is used,following Aristotle in his Poetica, by relating two things that had not been related before by analogy, as in "its snaky hair")

i. Epiphor (in which, following Wheel wright 1960:5, a simple translation or act of equivalence is made as a bridge from a part of a known thing to a part of a previously unrelated thing that is made similar)

ii. Diaphor (in which a more complex and indirect linkage is made between aspects of equally previously unknown and unrelated things)

B. Analogue (the things or aspects of things that are related by the act of analogy)

1. Manifest (readily perceived similarities between things or aspects of things in the real or empirical world). Most of the analogues discussed in this book are of this type.
2. Imported (more indirect things between which similarities are seen; according to Leatherdale 1974:18, these things come from adjacent fields of inquiry and are related to the field under consideration, as in science or technology-both technical and magical)
3. Topic (the field immediately under consideration for analogical activity)

C. Model (a set of complex and systematically related analogues, "to include any imported analog which serves to formulate a topic analog," Leatherdale 1974:51). This is the sense in which model is used in this work, a system of mostly manifest analogues.

II. Equivalence (that some things or aspects of things not just look alike but actually appear to share most of their attributes according to some observers)

A. Symbol (unlike signs-Firth's "index," "signal," and "icon," 1973:74-75-symbols have no obvious perceptual links to what they represent; instead, their equivalence is arbitrary). In contrast to Lévi-Strauss, I emphasize the signlike rather than symbolic aspects of the figures in South Amerindian mythology.

1. Kenning (following Rowe 9167, the most farfetched mode of reference whereby, under the impetus of increasing demands for novelty as a result of boredom with the previous forms, the cognoscenti demand the most indirect and contrived mode of reference possible, as in "its nest of snakes," which can only be decoded as its "hair" by those who know the history of the connecting links specified above)
2. Indicator (a completely arbitrary equivalence in which the intermediary links, if any, have completely dropped out)

III. Identity (where to some observers two things or aspects of things look completely alike; they share all attributes and so may be interchanged with no alteration in meaning)

A. Synonym (lastly, metaphors do not die, nor do they become literal; they simply wear thin through excessive usage, become trite, and are therefore "invisible," Leatherdale 1974:110, as in "snaky" becoming a mere replacement for something else, like "sinuous")

I argue, therefore, that there is a regular semantic progression, a cycle of verbal style, that starts in metonym, goes on to simile, progresses through metaphor, develops into kenning, and ultimately decays into synonymy, until, under the restless prod of boredom, novelty is produced anew, starting with a fresh act of analogy. This may help to explain why so many figures pop up in the following model. Why use a whole zoo when a small set of animals will suffice? The answer, I believe, is that the audience for whom, after all, these tales are being told would simply lose interest in an endless set of stories about only cayman. A message is better conveyed if it keeps changing its guise, using new characters such as frog, maned wolf, otter, lizard, and black jaguar that partially overlap with cayman to introduce new bits of information.

Following Reichel-Dolmatoff (1971, 1974) I argue that the central metaphor that unites all the disparate signs and symbols of the model is the fertilized egg. In other words, the universe as South American Indians conceive it to be is a kind of cosmic zygote that postulates existence as a continual and self-generating process of different, antagonistic, but complementary forces embodied in the drama

of mortality—death yielding up life and life surrendering to death. Further, I hypothesize that this cosmology is both a reflection of and a justification for the pervasive sexual division of
labor that sustains the social organization of the tribal societies of the jungle. In guessing at the outlines of this system my object is thus as much culture-historical as it is structural: to show the fundamental unity of a body of oral tradition as a unique expression of the way historically related and culturally analogous societies confront a roughly similar environment.

I first sketch the scope of the model's applicability and the place of the Shipibo material within it. Then I define its constituent "natural symbols" (Douglas 1970) and explore their mutual interrelationships by using mythical and relevant ethnographic data from the Shipibo and other lowland tribes. Then, I assemble the model and delineate some of the principles on which it is based. Finally, I sketch the extent of the model by examining some adjacent areas and inquire into its possible antiquity by using archaeological evidence from those same regions.

I hope the system has enough explanatory power to account for much of the mythical data incorporated within it and has as well some predictive utility for analyzing myths not used in its original fabrication. I am, of course, aware that the exact configuration of the model is not sacred and that its longevity is strictly contingent on its continued utility. It will have served its purpose if some new interpretations and data emerge in the debate to come and if some old ideas are reassessed in a manner not possible before. Successful ruins do not endure, save as useful building blocks in succeeding edifices, even if they are but building s of the mind.

Theory and Method in the Analysis of Myth

While I use some of the methods and take advantage of many of the results of Lévi-Strauss's monumental structural analysis of myth, especially as it is applied to South America in the first three volumes of his Mythologiques (1969, 1973, 1978), I also try to steer a middle course between, on the one hand, structuralism's employment of myths as relatively arbitrary and hence movable logical counters to probe the general properties of myth as a system and through myth to probe the general properties of the human mind and, on the other hand, the diametrically opposed views of Jung (1969) and Eliade (1959) that myths are composed of universal symbols either dredged up from the collective human unconscious or revealed to man through some numinous hierophant of a divine power.

Thus I present the entirely uncontroversial opinion that there

do seem to be some powerful symbols of great currency among human populations, in this South American tribal societies, that because of some obvious analogical connection with human psychology or physiology appear to carry the same meaning in a variety of different cultures. Yet because these symbols are also mental constructs they can, to a degree, change their meaning when they are juxtaposed with other symbols within local systems. My heresy, from the point of view of classical structuralism, is to assert that there is a system that circumscribes the degree to which symbols, based on their inherent characteristics, can be logically manipulated to change those characteristics or functions.

Although I may not be able to emulate his skill, I share Lévi-Strauss's basic intent "to reduce apparently arbitrary data to some kind of order, and to attain a level at which a kind of necessity becomes apparent, underlying the illusions of liberty" (Lévi-Strauss 1969:10). I apply that intent, however, to a specific goal that Lévi-Strauss would not share. Although I have used his insights—specifically the importance of animal symbols as "objective correlatives" of experience (Yalman 1967:71) and his demonstration of the central importance of the Culture-Nature dichotomy in South America (although that dichotomy has to be somewhat modified)—I pursue a goal Lévi-Strauss has specifically stated to be spurious: the construction of a schematic system out of the highly consistent semantic use of characters in individual myths. Lévi-Strauss said, "I do not hope to reach a stage at which the subject matter of mythology, after being broken down by analysis, will crystallize again into a whole with the general appearance of a stable and well-defined structure" (1969:3). This opinion derives from his belief that "however it is approached (myth) spreads out like a nebula, without ever bringing together in any lasting or systematic way the sum total of the elements from which it blindly derives its substance" (1969:2). In my view, this, although definitely a poetic vision, is too pessimistic.

The usual charge levied against Lévi-Strauss's methods is that the elegant order he discovers in the "real world" is merely a projection of his own presuppositions. Therefore his science is really a tautological pseudoscience:

> Mentalistic idealism is *tautological* in the sense that the posited mental aspect, which cannot be observed, is inferred from the cultural phenomenon that is observed; when the inference, in turn, becomes the *explanation* of the cultural institution, a perfect circle, however freehand, has been drawn. (Service 1968:400-401)

The brilliant French rationalist "discovers," as it were that the natives think according to the dictates of Cartesian logic (Geertz 1967:28). Weiss (1975:523), on the basis of an exhaustive analysis of the cosmology of a single tribe, the Riber Campa, and an attempt to apply Lévi-Straussian methods to myths in that cosmology, has accused his "mythic all-structure" of being a procrustean bed and his methods of having questionable universality. Admittedly Lévi-Strauss does have his idiosyncrasies and like all artists rather enjoys making love to ideas upon a procrustean bed of his own making, but his scientistic use of algebraic formulas at least gives his system the impression of rigid order.

Whereas others thus criticize his excessive order, I question exactly the opposite by maintaining that, on another level, the meaning of myths as a total set displays, as he presents it, a nebulousness that can be derived from those very same presuppositions. "If, as we believe to be the case, the unconscious activity of the mind consists in imposing forms upon content" (Lévi-Strauss 1963:21), and if that content is a seamless net with no natural nodes to mark the intersections of its threads, then any account of that content will also be nebulous. Perhaps that is why, once one has finished the 817 pages of Lévi-Strauss's first two volumes on South American mythology, one still has a certain difficulty in understanding what that mythology might have meant to its creators as a total system. One has, instead, an admirable understanding of how parts of that system are opposed or correlated to illuminate various themes. My purpose is to go one step further and relate those themes to an even larger whole.

No doubt Lévi-Strauss stopped where he did because of an epistemological stance that dismisses any larger integration as a form of "premature closure" (Kaplan 1964:70) in the investigation of what must be an open-ended process; human thought. There are benefits to be gained, however, from even an early assessment of a domain. Like a skeptical Dr. Samuel Johnson in debate with Bishop Berkeley, it is more comforting and more practical to believe that the world has an existence and form at least partly independent of the intelligence that perceives it and that there are indeed a few "rock" out there to be kicked. To assert the authority of yet another eminent structuralist: "The discovery of structure may, either immediately or at a much later stage, give rise to formalization which is, however, always the creature of the theoretician, whereas structure itself exists apart from him" (Piaget 1970:5).

Indeed in contrast to the dissolution of structure in the physical world as the concrete Newtonian atom dissolves into a welter of only partially predictable "charmed particles," "quarks," and "neutrinos," the biologic world, through the duality-of-patterning character of DNA, may represent a structural model for all succeeding levels of organization. Life itself, as Piaget has elegantly put it, may be a form of "general intelligence" (1970:114).

Or to put it in more currently anthropological terms, if the world is not full of self-evident, equivalent, and typologically discrete bits of hard data that can by careful induction impose generalizations on an essentially tabula rasa consciousness—as the cultural materialist perspective would have it (Harris 1968:575)—neither is it an indivisible web on which a highly structured mind must impose deductive form—as is the structuralist perspective (Lévi-Strauss 1969:3).[3] Man is not a double-lobotomized robot riding blindly on the back of a technoenvironmental-nexus prime mover (Carneiro 1974), nor is he a decephalized pure intelligence floating in a chaotic void and in but tenuous contact with it via the endoskeleton of his own mental structures.[4] Both extremes dissolve culture, one as the useless epiphenomenon of behavior, the other as purely a problem in human psychology. Man is, rather, an exceptionally brainy primate who through mind games turns an obdurate world into a strong contributor to his own consciousness as it evolves through both purposive and random search activity.

Thus to the extent that my attempt can be called structuralist at all, its closest affinity is to Laughlin and d'Aquili's (1974) concept of "biogenetic structuralism," which combines and synthesizes both the thesis of traditional structuralism and the antithesis of traditional materialism into a viable system based on feedback. Biogenetic structuralism seeks to integrate both induction and deduction into a unified theory of perception whereby partially structured world through a feedback system of inquiry that adds to the completion of both while generating a useful abstraction—culture—in the process.[5] In that sense not only does culture respond to the imperatives of environmental stress through its technological peripherals, but in the form of mythology its ideological core can aid in the very selection of that technology (Rivière 1969a).

T. Turner (1968:188), in particular, illustrates both how the

realities of technoeconomic social life imitate the art of myth and how the art of myth imitates the realities of technoeconomic life. First he shows how the fissionable Northern Kayapó social structure is able to resist the virtually year-round possibility of centrifugal trekking because of the powerful suasion to village union and reunion that its mythical symbols provide. Second he demonstrates how the content and interrelations of the mythical symbols derive from the demands of the oscillation between sedentism and the trek.

In a similar vein Reichel-Dolmatoff (1976:308) shows how aspects of their mythology, specifically their belief in a "Master of Animals", help the Tukano Indians of the Colombian jungles maintain their ecosystem by restricting overhunting. Thus I see myth as a real participant in the hard work of cultural survival rather than as a useless but fascinating adornment of culture, the fit province for antiquarians and literati. This should be clear from my examination of the role of myth in the perpetuation of Shipibo culture in the context of the ever-shifting matrix of ethnic relations in the Peruvian montana.

There seems to be a widespread reservation about the "thinness" of traditional structuralist semantic analysis (Douglas 1967:63; Drummond 1977:848; Geertz 1973; Spiro 1979:7) Grand or emotionally charged themes are magically reduced to barren and affectively neutral messages such as the formal properties of the marriage system or the Culture-Nature distinction. Although this is a very real weakness in traditional structuralist interpretation (and one to which I address myself below), there is some defense that can be offered for this neutral approach to myth imagery. Levi-Strauss in particular honed his methodology in the analysis of South Amerindian myth. There is evidence that, because of a pervasive cultural emphasis on a certain flatness of interpersonal relations, a withdrawal from openly displayed affect, a reluctance to show one's true feelings, the images that appear either in the public mythology or in the provate mythology of dreams do tend to be decoded by Amazonian Indians in rather neutral ways.[6]

Kracke describes his puzzlement about the Tupi-Kagwahiv traditional and somewhat stereotyped repertoire of dream imagery interpretations:

So many of them seen to be a *reversal* of the symbolic interpretations of psychoanalysis. Highly charged content is "interpreted" as innocuous:

[whereas Western psychology will take an innocuous object like a broom handle and interpret it as a highly charged phallis symbol]. When one dreams of a pregnant woman, it means you will find a nest of honeybees. What such as interpretation does…is to reduce the need for disguise in dreams. By reassuring the dreamer that his highly conflict-laden, emotionally charged dream really means something more neutral or pleasant, it enables him to on dreaming of his emotional conflicts in relatively undistorted form. The anxiety is allayed not entirely by repression, but in part by a simple denial through the traditional interpretations. (1979:163)

As I read his description of the control on the expression of emotion in Kagwahiv society, the suppression of overt demonstrations of affection or aggression, the stress on harmony, which is often produced by withdrawal from conflict or the presentation of an impassive social mask, "always presenting an agreeable front, a value often perceived by outsiders as duplicity" (Kracke 1979:163), I noted its close parallels with a picture I had drawn of Shipibo male personality from half a continent away in the jungles of Peru (Roe 1978a). As with the Shipibo, this regimen leads to a bottling up of aggression among the Kagwahiv: "Indeed, it makes aggressive impulses all the more difficult to deal with, and grudges all the more dangerous. A person will not express anger when affronted and may hold it in until it bursts out in violence" (Kracke 1979:163). In the old days fighting and a ferocious martial tradition among both groups allowed for the externalization of such aggression and, in the Kagwahiv case, extreme acts such as cannibalism. Nowadays, killing being prohibited, a pervasive belief in black magic and the phenomenon of fiesta-pattern drunkenness takes its place: "Drinking at fiestas frequently leads to fighting, a progression which is earnestly deplored, and repeated at the nest fiesta" (Kracke 1978a:22-23). The Shipibo are not quite so moralistic about this; in fact traditionally many men kept a small knife (*huishate*) on their person or tucked in the thatch of their hut; it was exclusively used for bloodletting during the normal progression to overt violence that their fiestas afforded them.

This pattern of reserve coupled with explosive emotional detonation is not limited to two unrelated South American tropical forest societies; it is recurrently mentioned for many Amerindian groups in Central and South America, highlands and lowlands. It seems to be linked with a shallowness of interpersonal involvement whereby kinship statuses are more important than individual personalities and whereby many, but by no means all,

social relations are both functionally diffuse and highly exposed (Gregor 1974:334). In fact I suggest that there may be a close causal relationship between the very "structural" way many mythical episodes are decoded into neutral meanings and the neutral presentation of self and other in Amazonian societies as part of a comprehensive program of public personality management (Gregor 1970, 1974, 1977, 1979).

Nevertheless, traditional structuralism seems to have gone a bit too far in its impersonal treatment of mythical characters and episodes. Therefore I use biogenetic structuralist methods to pursue a goal traditional structuralism has eschewed: the nonrandom or nonarbitrary aspects of the meaning of myths. Lévi-Strauss, like Chomsky, often approaches meaning as a function of syntax: "The truth of the myth does not lie in any special content" (1969:240) because "the symbols have no intrinsic and invariable significance; they are not independent in relation to the context" (1969:256). The significance of the symbols consists in their relations with other entities and not with their own identity. In his hands, the elements of myth are pure symbols, so many empty counters in a kind of mythical algebra (Lévi-Strauss 1973:473). To use Yalman's felicitous phrase "instead of the p and q of mathematical thinking, we shall have Jaguars and Wild Pigs related to each other in formal logic"(1967:71). This is where I differ. I do not believe that the jaguar or any of the other animal symbols used in lowland mythology is merely a "p" of a "q" for South Amerindians, even though, as Lévi-Strauss has convincingly demonstrated, they may derive at least some of their meaning in individual myths from their relationships to other animal symbols in those myths. Minor or subsidiary characters will derive more of their meaning from their relations, whereas the central characters will depend more on their own intrinsic properties.

Lévi-Strauss's position naturally derives from an opposition to the "old mythologists," like Jung and Eliade, who ascribe universal meanings to symbols.[7] What does one do, Lévi-Strauss counters, when specific ethnographic usages contradict the expected mythical associations? Indeed he delights in juxtaposing instances of such mythological contradictions to show the arbitrary content of all symbols.

This is the chief difficulty that struck me both as I read the literature on South American Indian myth and later as I recorded myths from the Shipibo. There seemed to be far too much redun-

dancy and repetition in them for the symbols to be entirely arbitrary. It is not that the anaconda, for example, is a sexual symbol only 50% of the time, as Lévi-Strauss's assumptions might dictate. Rather, that big constrictor stands for some kind of sexual connotation, male of female, in over 90% of the ethnographic cases.

Some kind of innate semantic programming, however modified by culture, mat be an explanation for this consistency of symbolic associations. There is certainly evidence to support such a position, particularly in the constancy of archetypal symbols, such as big snakes or big cats, in dreams and hallucinations reported cross-culturally from the area (Naranjo 1973:183; Reichel-Dolmatoff 1972a). In view of the fascination mixed with fear that many people exhibit in the presence of large cats or large or poisonous snakes (these are easily the most popular sets of cages in any zoo, as casual Sunday ethnography will attest; and the Shipibo kill a harmless snake with the same exaggerated panic as any American), Mundkur's (1978:140) mention of a psychological study of American children that quantifies this twin phobia is particularly interesting. Indeed there have been similar reports from the literature on the great apes, humankind's closest anthropoid relatives. Is it not interesting that the only two forms of life, outside of humans, who pose a significant threat to the apes are snakes and cats? We know that the human mind is composed of different subsystems that have evolved at different phylogenetic rates (Jerison 1976). Therefore rather than the specific chemical properties of the hallucinogenic drugs carrying images of these creatures to such disparate cross-cultural groups as northwest Amazonian Indians and urban Chilean Caucasians-a very improbable thing-could these drugs not be stimulating rather primitive regions of the brain wherein a kind of species memory of an originally highly adaptive kind lies encoded? Indeed Mundkur (1978) hints at the presence of phylogenetic factors as determinants of ophidiophobia.

There are more easily defended explanations for this phenomenon than species-level answers, however true they may be. In studies ranging from technological innovation (Barnett 1942:22) to the ethnotaxonomic systematizations of flora and fauna (Hunn 1977), simple formal similarities based on unperceived equivalences of shape, character, behavior, or performance-what I have called "manifest analogy"-compromise the most important criteria for analogical reasoning in nonliterate cultures. For example, Kracke has shown that many of the traditional Kagwahiv dream interpretations are based on obvious metaphorical analogy: "Dreams that

predict the death of a relative are, for example, a broken or falling-down house (by far the most common symbol I encountered)" (1979:130). In this culture that, like many others in Amazonia, had building materials lying close at hand, it was normal upon the death of a relative to desert a village, leaving the houses to fall into decay or burning them. This means that nay model of native cognition, like any model of our own (Leatherdale 1974), must lay equal stress on analogical and metaphorical as well as on analytical modes of thought:

Enough has been said so far to show that metaphors and similes are very far from being dispensable graces and ornaments of language, and that there is a least a close similarity (in the way they involve an interanimation or interaction of contexts which are to some degree analogous) between analogical acts, the use of models and the use of metaphors. Many of the writers on metaphor concur in claiming that metaphor is the very stuff of language-the instrument of thought. Language and thought grow together and the principle of growth is metaphor. (Leatherdale 1974:103)

Thus in its insistence that the order, existence, and interrelationships of symbols are partially derivable from their similar or contrastive observable characteristics and not just from their placement, much of the literature on symbolism is either an implicit (V. Turner 1964, 1967, 1973) or an explicit (Barth 1975:12) critique of the Lévi-Straussian approach.

Whereas Lévi-Strauss uses metaphor as a discovery procedure in his own work (Lévi-Strauss 1973:466) and has stressed its importance in South American Indian myth in general (Lévi-Strauss 1969:339), I find a more thorough-going treatment of metaphor, and one that forms the obvious prototype for this study, in Reichel-Dolmatoff's (1971) decoding of Desana cosmology. Reichel-Dolmatoff begins with analogy based on perceptual similarities, such as the shared yellow color of the jaguar, the sun, and semen.[8] Using the metaphor of pansexuality he then shows how the Desana make the analogical linkage between the three to produce a symbol, the fertilizing Jaguar Sun. Together with Lévi-Strauss's empirical categories (1969:1), like the raw and the cooked, these natural symbols are then submitted to an algebraic notation (e.g., jaguar: fire : : toad: water)[9] that along with other similar strings formulates general meaningful statements such as "the jaguar is the donor of the gifts of civilization." Symbolism here begins in metonym, coalesces in metaphor, and ends dissected by logic.

One can make the incautious claim that in this respect native mythology is very much like science in its first, or discovery, phase. To quote Black: "Perhaps every science must start with metaphor and end with algebra; perhaps without the metaphor there would never have been any algebra" (1962:242). What distinguishes mythology from science occurs in the later stage of its use or, more precisely, in the lack of a later stage. There is no feedback from empirical observations used to disconfirm the dictates of mythology. In stead anomalies from the phenomenological world are merely reformulated to reaffirm the structure of myth.

Of course one of the easiest "natural symbols" one can use in myth to structure the universe is the human body itself, particularly the "cosmologic body" wherein there is a natural system of correspondences between parts of the human body and parts of the nonhuman world. This anthropomorphization of the world is found all over the earth and in this model as well; yet the tendency to go one stop further and equate the systems of organization of the human parts (the total body configuration) and the nonhuman world, so that the world is just a larger and grander version of the normal human body form, is something I find peculiar to the strongly anthropocentric, hierarchical, and humanized states and state-descended societies of South America. There one sees natural phenomena being perceived in strongly anthropomorphic terms (Arguedas 1956:197, 200-201, on the Quechua), the cosmologic body writ large. A good example is Bastien's description of the Aymara-Quechua world view organized as it is around the huge mountains of their highland home: "The mountain had a head on the summit, a chest and shoulders on the central slopes, and, where two rivers diverge from below the central slopes, a crotch and legs" (1978:xviii). This same human-centric view is found, albeit to a weaker extent, among those tribes descended from fairly elaborate chiefdoms, like the Kogi (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1974) and possibly the Warao (Wilbert 1970, 1975a:163). Yet even there one finds the more basic association that the world is a kind of cosmic egg (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1974:297). For the rest, I find little evidence that the cosmos of the less stratified jungle tribes ever bore so strongly human a stamp.[10] Instead the natural symbols used there are more generalized, such as the egg or the process of coition, and humans merge with were-creatures, animals, and spirits in a most egalitarian fashion.

My methodology for the analysis of these animal symbols fol-

lows Reichel-Dolmatoff's and Lévi-Strauss's but is simplified in a manner that perhaps comes perilously close to "American formalism" (Hammel 1972:8) in its streamlining of structuralism. Essentially I use in my analysis only oppositional, correlational, transformational, and transitive-correlational propositions, particularly the latter. I believe with Reichel-Dolmatoff that "there are chains of such symbolic associations that follow an order, although frequently a transposition of component elements occurs" (1971:93). The analysis follows these chains as they interconnect to form the model.

In my wish to assign highly clustered patterns of meaning to individual characters prior to using them to construct the model, I do not deny their "multivocality" (V. Turner 1973:1100-1101). While agreeing with Siskind that "one cannot translate these symbols by one-to-one meanings like words in a dictionary, rather they are complexes of mood, concept, and need, condensed into a symbol such as the land turtle, the tapir, etc." (1973:159), I believe that the regularity of content and function each animal symbol exhibits in the myths constitutes its central core or focus of meaning. Rather then the typological pigeonholing of tale-typing figures within a single meaning slot, which Siskind criticizes, my approach is essentially statistical. I have, in fact, borrowed from modal analysis in archaeology (Raymond, DeBoer, and Roe 1975) a statistical method geared to investigating both "paleo-ideas" in prehistoric cultures and present cognitive patterns in ethnographic material-cultural assemblages and applied it to the study of myth.

Using this method one first isolates each character's focuses of meaning by coding its associations or functions in each myth. Then the functions for each character are ranged on one axis and the number of myths on the other to produce scattergrams of meaning. If the structural analysis that went into the original coding was done correctly (key associations or functions having been picked), then one should find a central core of frequently found associations surrounded by a less numerous and ill-patterned spattering of unexpected associations for each character. Provided that these unexpected meanings are not direct inversions of the clustered focuses of meaning, and therefore equivalent in structuralist terms to identity, the anomalous meanings form the inevitable fuzzy boundaries of the symbol's semantic range. This process also isolates the exceptions, so that one can investigate them to see how anomalous they really are. Even so, the best way to negotiate a

symbol's ambiguity for the purposes of systematization is to stick to the nonoverlapping core meanings the scattergrams have produced. There will always be exceptions; indeed the method is predicated on that. There are also trends, and the method is constructed to make those trends visible. My aim, in short, is to be able to say, not so much what will invariably be signified when a given symbol appears, but what is most likely to be meant when it does.

The next step in the analysis is to relate the various focuses of meaning logically to each other according to some guiding principles so that a complete structure can be assembled. For example, say that I have isolated a "Good," "Yellow," or "Day" Jaguar semantic cluster that is in turn associated with nurturing of both crops and human villages and their protection from supernatural aggression and disease, that is in turn based on an underlying principle of benevolence of fecundity. Then I can oppose that first cluster to another I have isolated, the "Evil." "Black," or "Night" Jaguar, whose symbolic associations are exactly the opposite. In the process I have erected a dyadic pair, dual manifestations of a single figure.

Such a dyadic opposition is not a complete or static one. I significant degree of overlapping, or complementary opposition, is built into all of these symbols. Hugh-Jones (1974:139, on the Barasana) shows how primarily masculine symbols like the sacred flutes also have limited feminine associations. At the same time, essentially feminine symbols, like the gourd full of beeswax (which among the Barasana substitutes for honey(, have limited masculine associations as well. The concept of dualism best accounts for this dynamic overlap while preserving the kernel oppositionary structure.

With regard to the actual meaning of such figures once isolated, one will find a remarkable congruence between my findings and those of Levi-Strauss despite our difference in intent and methods. Despite that congruence one important difference emerges. I find that Lévi-Strauss's dyadic oppositions are, in a way, not dyadic enough. The situation is both more complicated and a great deal simpler than that which Lévi-Strauss depicts for each of his characters. I have found that each figure, from the jaguar to the tapir, the Forest Ogre to the moon, contrasts with other figures but also with itself along any one dimension. For example, in the dimension of sex I found that two manifestations of

each figure occupy both ends of the polar continuity from male to female symbolism. In other words, there is not just one jaguar or one tapir or one monkey or one harpy eagle that opposes the others. Instead there are two jaguars, two tapirs-a male and a female manifestation of each-that contrast both with each other and with the different manifestations of other figures. Although at times my dualism may thus appear a bit overwhelming, all I can do is reference my belief that the key to understanding South Amerindian tropical forest thought is to realize its strong dualistic cast and its further tendency to amplify that dualism by playing with the resultant contrastive and congruent dyads (Whitten 1976:40, 177 on the Canelos Quichua).

Many critics who have not worked in the South American lowlands also seem to view Lévi-Strauss's heavy use of binary oppositions as a bit too neat or pervasive. Yet despite the problems with his use of binary pairs, once one has actually begun to explore the intricacies of lowland myth with native informants, one cannot help but note the extent and symmetry with which the Indians have recourse to this pattern of concept formation. As Schindler points out for the Carijona, "binary oppositions play an important role in human thought. If one is investigating the thought of various ethnic groups, one sees again how a broad range of phenomena are subsumed under a convenient pair of opposed terms" (1977:70).

Reichel-Dolmatoff refers to this same preference for dualism when he discussed Tukano Indian concepts from the northwest Amazon:

The idea of the double, the mirror-image, is fundamental to many Tukano concepts. Inside the hills, the Master of Game Animals is, in all essence, the double of the payé [shaman], and the animals themselves are the doubles of those found in the forest. Within the hills, these spirit-beings lead an existence identical with that of human society: they have their dances, their music, their food and drink, and they take narcotic drugs. The same happens in the underwater "houses" in the deep pools, where the Masters of Fish lead their existence. There is, then, "another world" matching in detail our world of empirical reality. (1975:192)

In this I concur, but I go even further. There are other worlds, and within those worlds *nahuals* ("doubles") of both humans and animals who complexly sport their contrastive characters as if in a room of mirrors, to define by their reflected light the contours of the world of everyday experience (Civrieux 1970:21-22, on the

Makiritare). One may even say that this pattern of multiple-character reflection is like the light from the upper world that haphazardly pierces the triple-tiered jungle canopy to produce a shimmering and illusory tableau of splintered light and deep shadow on the gloomy and largely unobstructed forest floor. I further agree with Reichel-Dolmatoff (1975:197) that narcotic drugs and the commonness of their use may well play a part in interacting with this naturally baroque background-a background into which gaudily marked and plumaged animals and birds blend as if they were clothed in the drabbest camouflage-to produce the imagery I study in this system.[11] But I also aggress with Lévi-Strauss (1963:230) that the emotive stuff of the savage mind, however obtained, is disciplined by a rigorous, if not always conscious, reasoning faculty that makes use of analogy and other modes of thought to explicate the worlds of being and meaning.

In the following discussion I use Weiss's definition of cosmology as meaning "the complete set of ideas about the nature and composition of the world or universe that is included in any given cultural system" (1975:219) to explain how people and spirits find their place in that world. Mythology then becomes the set of tales, putatively real but occurring in unspecified or vague time or place, describing how the system arose or functions. In this context myths are to be distinguished from folktales in that the latter are often placed in some specific time or place, although to modern eyes the actions in them may seem equally fabulous. I use both of these "public" verbal forms, as well as the "private" myths of dreams, which share in the same culturally determined imagery.

I do not claim that the present-day Shipibo, or any other selva tribe for that matter, have in their heads the consistent and well-integrated cosmologic model I have constructed from their tales, at least not on the conscious level. The empirical evidence of a humming and buzzing confusion of often-contradictory individual myths is too much to the contrary. As Shaver points out for the Campa-Nomatsiguenga, their "idea about the universe is not always a stable or comprehensible idea over which all the people are in agreement" (1975:49, trans. Mine). Yet I would hasten to add that disagreemtn among individuals, of the ignorance of any one individual, may not mean the end of any possibility of reconstructing a system for a particular group. In the words of Weiss:

No Campa is familiar with all the cosmological ideas and idea sequences held by the Campas collectively. Yet it is clear that it is not a matter of different Campas possessing different cosmologies, but rather of different Campas possessing various, partially overlapping, fractions of a single cosmology. (1975:227)

I further recognize that informants are frequently unsure, contradicting themselves or others and at the same time creatively reinterpreting things according to how they feel or to the social expectations of their audiences. I can indeed recall instances in which informants have given me complex variants of a tale one night and then come to me in the morning, usually after having talked in the interim with others who "knew the story better," only to create out of the original variant two or three related variants, chopping out whole narrative sequences and inventing others in the process. All I argue is that the new variants are cut from the same cloth as the old ones.

Indeed, using the parallels of other world areas (Hogbin 1970:29), a certain ideaological fluidity may be expected in tribal cosmologies as they reflect the loose egalitarian structure of their supporting societies (Swanson 1960). After all, there is no single voice of orthodoxy in a society such as the Shipibo. Rather, all one finds are individual and highly creative informants. Weiss, for example, shows how one Campa shaman, as a demonstration of his shamanistic virtuosity, invented a new category of cosmic place. Yet, "it is significant that Campa cosmology appears to allow for such extension and elaboration of beliefs as long as it adheres to the logic of the system" (1975:251). It is only when one reached complex stratified societies, like the Aztec, that professional theologians into neat and logical systems; but even there, as Soustelle (1961:116) points out, they never really succeed.

What I do claim, however, is that one economical way of understanding and anticipating the majority of associations in Shipibo or similar tribal mythologies is to postulate an underlying structure, a metacosmology. This is particularly important, not just to abstract a picture of how elements were articulated in some synchronic and now dead "ethnographic present," but to understand how myths can be changed to reflect the new demands, such as the definition of both ethnic- and self-identity within the context of a pluralistic, postcolonial world, that are imposed on tribal societies by expanding national frontiers (Drummond 1977:859).

Environmental Setting

Because my model draws its metaphors from among the denizens of the tropical rain forest, I must now relate ecosystem and mythology. The rain forest is not a uniform niche, particulatly in its associations with riverine habitats. Because of the increased carrying capacity that conjuction affords, the model best applies to those horticulturalists, aquatic hunters, and fishers, like the Shipibo, who exploit the new alluvial lands constantly being renewed as they border the annually flooding muddy, meandering white-water rivers of Amazonia. The model is not intended to account quite as well for the myths of the more nomadic hunters and farmers of the other major niche, the interfluvial old alluvium, whose resources are both more limited and more uncertain than those along the main channel (Lathrap 1968).

Because much of the content (as against the structure) of the model depends on the local availability of the major animals that form the central symbols of the system, those groups deprived of contacts with the new alluvial lowlands where these animals are most frequently found will have a mythological content slightly different from those in daily contact with these impressive beasts. The very large and dangerous black cayman, for example, is not commonly found in the fast-running streams of the Campa who are located in the outliers of the Andes. Thus it plays a relatively inconspicuous part in the mythology of even the River Campa; yet where it is mentioned it and other caymans fulfill the same place (the Master of Fish) it has in regions where it is most common (Weiss 1975:259).

There may be two reasons that divergent ecology has as little effect on the function of the major animal symbols as it does. The first is a cultural-historical reason. Many of the groups living in these divergent zones mayonce have come from the Amazonian lowlands and hence retain myths about the fauna of that area as survivals of their past-survivals that live on, I hasten to add, because they still have a function within the mythical system as a whole. Second, it may be precisely because a part of the model's structure *is* content that it appears to be resistant to modification. Thus although Whitten (1976:61f.) mentions that the megafauna of the floodplain (black cayman, porpoise, anaconda, manatee) are not found in the smaller tributaries of the higher Ecuadorian montaña where the Canelos Quichua are, smaller local faunal sub

stitutes like the lizard are made to carry the burden of the model's animal symbolism.

This does not mean that local ecology is irrelevant. Groups far away from the Amazonian network of rivers, such as those found in the savannah, will have a highly divergent cast of characters to which the model may not apply. For example, D. Moore, a linguist working with the Cinta-Larga-a Tupi-speaking group of the Brazilian shield who are not riverine but live instead on the *igarapés* ("seasonally flooded forests") and hunt much more than they fish-have a mythology that departs in significant ways from my model: "So far as I know, the cayman and monkeys are not very significant to the Gavião…I do have several myths in which squirrel, sloth, or turtle (tartaruga) play the role of trickster" (personal communication 1978).

The same holds true of groups who share many of the common characters of the lowland system but who live in slightly higher regions where local resources not found on the floodplain become locally important. One such category of resource is rock or stone. There are not stones, not even pebbles, in vast regions of the Amazon alluvial floodplain, it being too far from the outwash of the Andes. Instead all is mud. The Shipibo, for example, carefully import from upriver tiny red pebbles the call "*rencati"* and use as polishers to give a glossy "floated surface" to their leather-hard ceramics. None are available locally. In contrast, the realm of the Campa on the upper Ucayali near Shahuaya is loaded with pebbles, boulders, and fantastic rock outcroppings in their karst topography. Thus, along with the Jívaro and the Canelos Quichua, who live in similar regions, the mythology of the Campa is full of various characters who transform themselves or are transformed into boulders or stones (Weiss 1975:289, 314-316). Such characters do not appear in Shipibo mythology; yet the notion of mountaints as abodes of ogre figures (Weiss 1975:285) does occur in Shipibo myth even though the mountains referred to are far away. Thus adherents to the model are quite as capable of shifting from stones to mountains as they are from jaguars to pumas; local raw material slips into the preexistent slots of the system.

Geographically, the model centers on the lowlands of the Amazon basin, surrounded in the north by the Guianas, Venezuela, the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta region of the northwest Colombia, and the Panamanian isthmus. Connected as it is to the cultural sphere of Venezuela and the Antilles, the Atlantic watershed of

Costa Rica forms the northern periphery of the model's coverage. Closer to the center of the continent, the model obtains its examples from the northwest Amazon, the Montaña, the central Amazon, the Xingú, and the lower Amazon. Historical connections override divergent local ecology in the Gran Chaco and the southern Brazilian highlands and eastern Brazil to the south, which are all parts of the area covered by the model. The real disjunction occurs between this broad circular lowland region within the model and the Andean highlands to the west and southwest outside of it. There a different but obviously cognate model holds sway (Avila 1598?/1966; Badtien 1978; Faron 1961, 1964a, 1964b) until one reaches the tip of Tierra del Fuego at the end of the continent, where a radically different ecology necessitates yet another (Wilbert, ed. 1975, 1977).

For the purposes of this book I have divided lowland Central and South America into a series of culture-geographis regions broadly based on Steward's (1949:670, map 18) system for the *Handbook of South American Indians* (Steward, ed., 1946, 1947, 1948a, 1948b, 1949, 1950). This system is depicted in Figure 1. I will begin with the MONTAÑA (M), a region that refers to the eastern slopes of the Andes above the floor of the Amazon basin and below the presently sparsely populated zone of the *ceja*, or "cloud forest." The Montaña, although jungle, is somewhat drier than the rest of the lowlands and encompasses the eastern portions of the present countries of Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia. In Bolivia it is locally known as the *Yungas*. To the north of this zone is the NORTHWEST AMAZON (NA), which includes the jungles of Colombia centering on the Vaupés and Putumayo rivers.

Across the Amazon, to include the vast central area drained by its southern tributaries-Juruá, Purùs, and the Madeira-is the CENTRAL AMAZON (CA). Continuing eastward one encounters the ancient dry plateau of the BRAZILIAN HIGHLANDS (BH) drained by the Tocantins. The XINGÙ region within it is centered on the river by that name but is differentiated from it by the presence of a unique cultural synthesis there. As one approaches the eastern coast of Brazil one finds oneself within the EASTERN BRAZIL (EB) region of high relief with a narrow, low coastal belt. Proceeding up the coast, the next area is the LOWER AMAZON (LA), which incorporates the complex and braided channel of the Amazon as it approaches the Ilha da Marajó.

To the north, around the curve of South America lies the

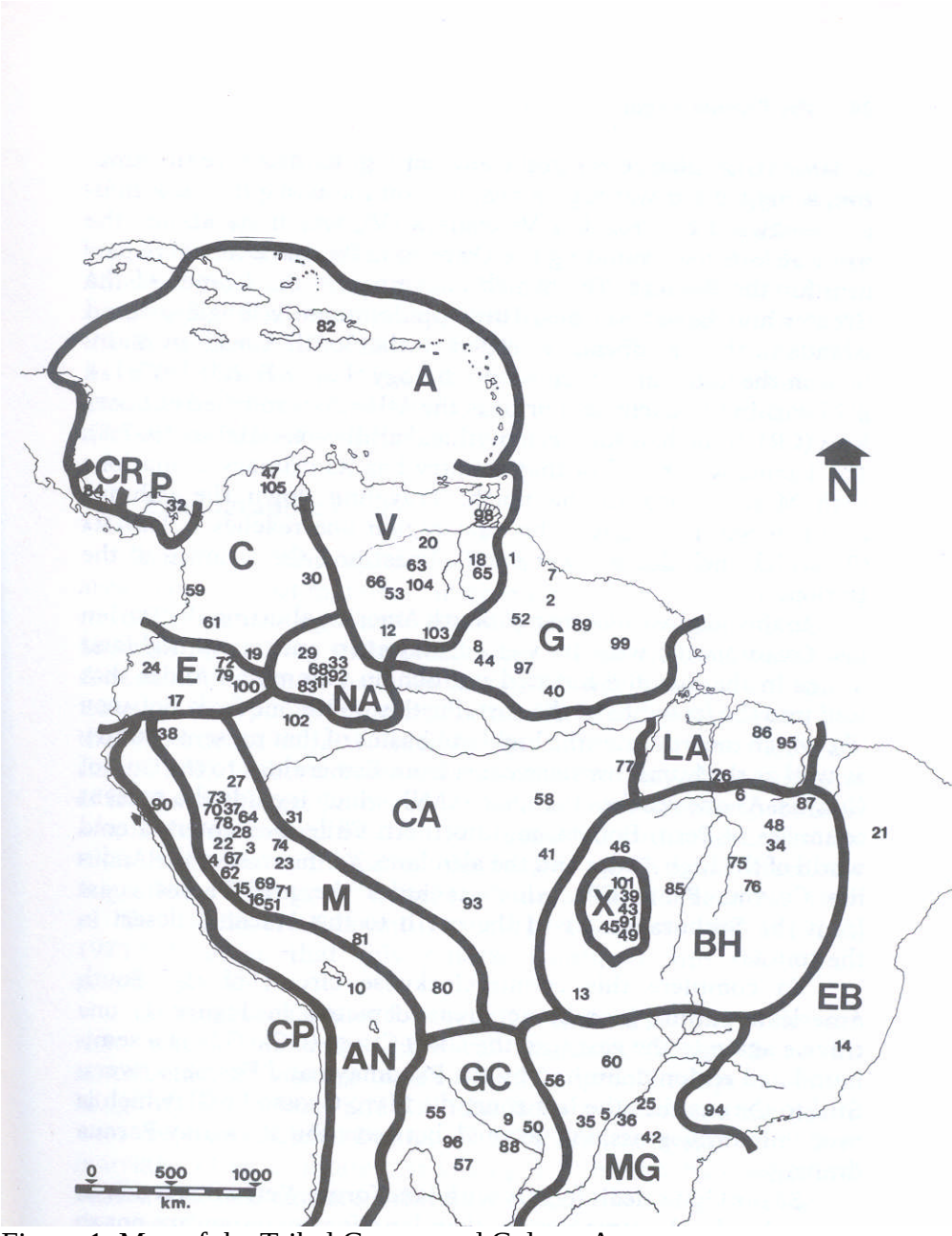


Figure 1. Map of the Tribal Groups and Culture Areas

GUIANAS (G), which refers to the ancient highlands above the Amazon, a rugged but wet region centered on the Essequibo. Continuing westward one reaches VENEZUELA (V), which stands for the tropical forest surrounding the Orinoco delta, the point of departure for the ANTILLES (A), which encompasses the islands of the Greater and Lesser Antilles. These predominantly jungle-covered islands in the Caribbean were tied to the South American mainland in the cultural domain of mythology (López Baralt 1977:11). Still within the Caribbean orbit is the Atlantic watershed of COSTA RICA (CR). It too had southern mythical affiliations (Helms 1977:8). The Pacific watershed of that country has its primary affiliations with Mesoamerica to the north. Traveling down the isthmus again to South America, the next region one reaches is PANAMA (P), which includes the wet Pacific coast and the swamps of the Darien.

In the northwest corner of South America abutting the Darien lies COLOMBIA (C) with its wet coastal strip and many highland basins in the low and forested multichain Colombian Andes that feed into the lowlands to the east. Further south one finds ECUADOR (E), which incorporates the highland basins of that present country as well as the humid western coast from Esmeraldas to the Gulf of Guayas. As one reaches the ANDES (AN), which include the present countries of Peru, Bolivia, and northern Chile, one enters a cold world of the high Andes and the altiplano. To the west of the Andes lies COASTAL PERU (CP), which includes the arid Pacific coast from the Sechura desert in the north to the Atacama desert in the south.

To complete this counterclockwise circuit of the South American culture-geographic areas depicted in Figure 1, one travels again to the east into the GRAN CHACO (GC). This is a semi-inundated region delimited by the Pilcomayo and Bermejo rivers. Still to the east lies the last zone, the MATO GROSSO (MG), which is predominantly grassland located between the Paraguay-Parana drainages.

So far I have dealt mostly with land forms. Yet, when it comes to people, clearly more mobile than land forms, things are not so neat. Some montaña groups, like the Jìvaro (Harner 1972) or the Canelos-Quichua (Whitten 1976), straddle the fance in both geography and mythology, with affinities to both the highlands and the lowlands, and are therefore hard to pigeonhole. Other “lowland” groups like the River Campa have a patina of highland cosmology,

largely in the form of the names for highland gods like *Virakocha* ("Viracocha"), *Ínka* ("Inca"), *Inti* ("Inti"), and the *Pachákama ("Pachacamac"),* because of sporadic contact with highlanders; but their cosmological system is otherwise very similar to other Amazonian groups (Weiss 1975:232, 270, 272, 419, 491-493). Other supposedly "highland" groups like the Páez (Bernal Villa 1953), the Kogi (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1974), or the Yupa (Wilbert 1974) have a decidedly "lowland" mythology. On the whole, however, geography, ethnic distributions, and mythology have remarkably similar patterns of occurrence.

Ethnographic Scope

What is my justification for considering the entire Amazonian area to be one vast mythical "interaction sphere"? The answer lies in both archaeology and ethnology. Archaeological evidence abounds for uniting widespread areas within single cultural traditions in the remote past. An example is the "Barrancoid" tradition that incorporates cultures from as far afield as Barrancas near the Venezuelan delta to Hup-Iya in the Peruvian montaña (Lathrap 1970). In more recent contact-eriod history, the production of far-flung linkages produced by the mass movement of peoples is amply demonstrated by the Carib expansion into the Lesser Antilles from the mainland of the long-range Guarani messianic migrations. Strings of transitive ethnic interconnections, such as the Gê-Borro-Guarani nexus (Lévi-Strauss 1969:141-142, 1973:64), prove that this process continues into the ethnographic present.

Current mechanisms for the interaction of peoples of the sort that would encourage mythical exchange range from institutionalized "visting" and cultural "apprenticeship," as in the Xingú (O. Villas Boas and C. Villas Boas 1973:14) and the northwest Amazon (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1971:127), to systematic intermarriage, often facilitated, as among the Shipibo, by raiding and consequent wife capture. Whitten, particularly, has shown how in the Ecuadorian montaña every Canelos-Quichua *ayllu* ("descent and locality-based group") segment contains members of other ethnic groups (Zaparoan, Jívaroan, and Highland Quechua) and how they perpetuate their cultural identity through "myths, design, medicinal secrets or shamanistic procedure" (1976:135).

Empirically, this study does not pretend to be an exhaustive

study of all myths from all tribes in lowland South America. Such a task is too large for a work of this length, if indeed it is realizable at all. I have, however, encountered enough redundancy in theme and content to indicate that one need not search out every scrap of data to discern a pattern. Similarly, I follow Lévi-Strauss (1969:4) in reserving the right to use ethnographic facts about customs, rituals, and social patternings, in addition to myths, folktales, and dreams, to reconstruct the system.[12]

In all, I used some 804 myths and relevant ethnographic facts from some 105 ethnic of linguistic groups to construct the model. Table 1 lists these groups in alphabetical order, their numbers referring to the numbers that locate them on Figure 1. Table 2 places these groups within the culture-geographic areas outlined in Figure 1 and orders them by their propinquity to each other. It also indicated the total number of myths and ethnographic facts used from each area and group. This information is presented differently in Table 3, which ranks the areas by their number of contributions to the model, thereby giving an idea of the model's intended coverage. This ranking corresponds fairly well to what we know about the culture-historical affinities of these areas with each other (Lévi-Strauss 1969:141-142, 148; 1973:64, 112, 115). An anomaly such as the low placement of eastern Brazil reflects nothing more than the paucity of mythological data from this area because of early European contact and the consequent ethnic extinctions there. As one can see, the model has the best coverage for the area I specialize in, the Montaña; then comes the northwest Amazon, reflecting the work of Reichel-Dolmatoff, and the Brazilian highlands, based on the work of Lévi-Strauss and others. The remaining areas follow in order of expectable relationships.

These tables indicate that, with its vast interconnecting web of waterways knitting together similar microenvironments, the Amazonian region is a perfect highway of ideas. The impact of this exchange can easily be seen in a uniformity of mythical themes throughout the region (Weiss 1975:481-508). This is doubly the case if ideology, as has been shown elsewhere (Adams 1974), changes less rapidly than the technoenvironmental adaptation of migrating groups, now far afield, who were once in close proximity. Such an explanation would go a long way toward explaining the Guianan or Gran Chacoan similarities with the central Amazon that Lévi-Strauss saw, or the uncanny resemblances I uncovered between myths of the Peruvian montaña and the Guianas. There-

fore there are culture-historical and geographical reasons, in addition to the ecological ones already mentioned, to justify what might appear to be capricious daisy picking of similar myths or mythical episodes for comparison from disparate or widely separated groups.

Table 1. Alphabetical Listing of Cultural-Longuistic Groups from Figure 1 Used to Construct the Model

Group Number	*Group*	*Culture Area*	*Group Number*	*Group*	*Culture Area*
1	Akawaio	G	31	Culina	M
2	Akuriyo	G	32	Cuna	P
3	Amahuaca	M	33	Desana	NA
4	Amuesha	M	34	Gê	BH
5	Apapocuya	MG	35	Guarani	MG
6	Apinayé	BH	36	Hetá	MG
7	Arawak	G	37	Iscobakebu	
8	Arecuna	G		(Isconahua)	M
9	Ashluslay	GC	38	Jivaro	M
10	Aymara	AN	39	Juruna	X
11	Barasana	C	40	Kachuyana	G
12	Baré	V	41	Kagwahiv	
13	Bororo	BH		(Tupi-)	
14	Botocudo	EB		(Parintintin)	CA
15	Campa	M	42	Kaingang	MG
16	Campa-Nomat-		43	Kalapalo	X
	siguenga	M	44	Kalina	
17	Canelos			(Kaliana)	V
	Quichua	E	45	Kamaiurá	X
18	Carib	G	46	Kayapó	
19	Carijona	C		(Northern)	BH
20	Cariñas	V	47	Kogi	C
21	Cariri	EB	48	Kraho	BH
22	Cashibo	M	49	Kuikuru	X
23	Cashinahua	M	50	Lengua	GC
24	Cayapa	E	51	Machiguenga	M
25	Cayua	MG	52	Macusi	G
26	Cinta-Larga		53	Maquiritare	
	(Tupi-Gavião)	LA		(Ye'cuana)	V
27	Cocama	M	54	Mapuche	AN
28	Conibo	M	55	Mataco	GC
29	Cubeo	NA	56	Mbayá	MG
30	Cuiva	C	57	Mocovi	GC

Table 1. Alphabetical Listing of Cultural-Longuistic Groups from Figure 1 Used to Construct the Model (continued)

Group Number	*Group*	*Culture Area*
58	Mundurucú	CA
59	Noanamá	C
60	Opayé	MG
61	Páez	C
62	Pajonal Campa	M
63	Panare	V
64	Panoan	M
65	Pemón	V
66	Piaroa	V
67	Pichis Valley Campa	M
68	Pira-Tapuya	NA
69	Piro	M
70	Pisquibo	M
71	River Campa	M
72	Secoya	E
73	Setebo	M
74	Sharanahua	M
75	Shavante	BH
76	Sherente	BH
77	Shipaya	CA
78	Shipibo	M
79	Siona	E
80	Sirionó	M
81	Tacana	M
82	Taino	A
83	Taiwano	NA
84	Talamanca	CR
85	Tapirapé	BH
86	Tenetehara	LA
87	Timbira (Eastern)	GC
88	Toba-Pilaga	GC
89	Trio	V
90	Trujillo Mestizo	CP
91	Trumaí	X
92	Tukano	NA
93	Tupari	CA
94	Tupi	LA
95	Urubú	LA
96	Vilela	GC
97	Waiwai	G
98	Warao	V
99	Wayana	G
100	Witoto	NA
101	Xinguano	X
102	Yagua	CA
103	Yąnomamö	V
104	Yarabara	V
105	Yupa	C

NOTE. These group designations are not strictly tribal inasmuch as where tribal ascription is unavailable general linguistic designations, for example, "Panoan," are used. Further, where subgroup ascriptions are unavailable the more general term is listed, for example, "Campa," along with the subgroup designations, as in "Pajonal Campa." Where groups span several geographical-cultural regions, as "Carib" in both "G" and "A," they are listed in the region from which the mythical data on them was obtained. Lastly, where two or more names are given the same group, for example, "Machiguenga" and "Campa-Nomatsiguenga," both names have separate entries because the mythical information was gathered from different groups within the same "tribal" entity. Mythical data were drawn from all of the above groups in this book with the exception of the following groups, which were mentioned in an ancillary manner in the text: Akuriyo, Amuesha, Cocama, Iscobakebu, Pisquibo, Setebo, and Gê.

Table 2. List of Groups Used to Construct the Model by Culture-Geographic Area

Group Number	*Ethnic or Linguistic Group*	*Number of Myths and/or Customs*
EASTERN BRAZIL (EB)		(6)
14	Botocudo	1
21	Cariri	1
22	Tupi	4
LOWER AMAZON (LA)		(35)
26	Tupi-Gavião	9
86	Tenetehara	2
95	Urubu	24
GUIANAS (G)		(41)
1	Akawaio	3
7	Arawak	6
8	Arecuna	3
40	Kachuyana	2
44	Kalina	1
52	Macusi	6
89	Trio	5
97	Waiwai	13
99	Wayana	2
VENEZUELA (V)		(98)
12	Baré	1
18	Carib	6
20	Cariñas	1
53	Maquiritare	19
63	Panare	9
65	Pemón	5
66	Piaroa	5
98	Warao	37
103	Yąnamamö	10
104	Yarabara	5
ANTILLES (A)		(5)
82	Taino	5
COSTA RICA (CR)		(3)
84	Talamanca	3
PANAMA (P)		(6)
32	Cuna	6
COLOMBIA (C)		(30)
19	Carijona	3
30	Cuiva	5
47	Kogi	12
59	Noanamá	1
61	Páez	6
105	Yupa	3
ECUADOR (E)		(42)
17	Canelos Quichua	32
24	Cayapa	1
72	Secoya	2
79	Siona	4
100	Witoto	3
NORTHWEST AMAZON (NA)		(143)
11	Barasana	48
29	Cubeo	14
33	Desana	53
68	Pira-Tapuya	1
83	Taiwano	3
92	Tukano	24
MONTAÑA (M)		(199)
3	Amahuaca	3
15	Campa	1
16	Campa-Nomat-siguenga	9
22	Cashibo	5
23	Cashinahua	1
28	Conibo	3
38	Jivaro	5
51	Machiguenga	5

Table 2. List of Groups Used to Construct the Model by Culture-Geographic Area (continued)

Group Number	Ethnic or Linguistic Group	Number of Myths and/or Customs
62	Pajonal Campa	5
64	Panoan	4
67	Pichis Valley Campa	8
69	Piro	1
71	River Campa	70
74	Sharanahua	12
78	Shipibo	61
80	Sirionó	3
81	Tacana	3
ANDES (AN)		(4)
10	Aymara	3
54	Mapuche	1
COASTAL PERU (CP)		(1)
90	Trujillo Mestizo	1
GRAN CHACO (GC)		(14)
9	Ashluslay	2
50	Lengua	1
55	Mataco	5
57	Mocovi	1
88	Toba-Pilaga	4
96	Vilela	1
MATO GROSSO (MG)		(22)
5	Apapocuya	1
25	Cayua	1
35	Guarani	1
36	Hetá	10
42	Kaingang	7
56	Mbayá	1
60	Opayé	1
CENTRAL AMAZON (CA)		(63)
31	Culina	1
41	Tupi-Kagwahiv	23
58	Mundurucu	6
77	Shipaya	2
93	Tupari	2
102	Yagua	29
BRAZILIAN HIGHLANDS (BH)		(68)
6	Apinayé	20
13	Bororo	9
46	Northern Kayapó	12
48	Kraho	2
75	Shavante	2
76	Sherente	3
85	Tapirapé	18
87	Eastern Timbira	2
XINGÚ (X)		(24)
39	Juruna	3
43	Kalapalo	4
45	Kamaiurá	7
49	Kuikuru	3
91	Trumaí	4
101	Xinguano	3
		(804) total

Table 3. Ranking of Culture-Geographic Areas by Number of Contributions to the Model

Culture-Geographic Areas	*Number of Myths and/or Customs*	*Culture-Geographic Areas*	*Number of Myths and/or Customs*
Montaña (M)	199	Xingú (X)	24
Northwest Amazon (NA)	143	Mato Grosso (MG)	22
Venezuela (V)	98	Gran Chaco (GC)	14
Brazilian Highlands (BH)	68	Eastern Brazil (EB)	6
Central Amazon (CA)	63	Panama (P)	6
Ecuador (E)	42	Antilles (A)	5
Lower Amazon (LA)	35	Andes (AN)	4
Guianas (G)	41	Costa Rica (CR)	3
Colombia (C)	30	Coastal Peru (CP)	1

II



Myth, Cosmos, and Ceremony among the Shipibo

Ethnographic Sketch

My specific reference point is the mythology of the Shipibo, a populous, fairly acculturated Panoan-speaking new alluvial tribe of the Peruvian montaña. They number some 16,000-20,000 people spread out in villages of about 150 people each and in much smaller, isolated, multihouse matrilocal extended-family compounds up and down the middle Ucayali River, a major southern tributary of the Amazon. They occupy the banks and related oxbow lakes of that river from Cumaría in the north to the mouth of the Pachitea in the south, where a closely related people, the Conibo, begin their distribution. These people are "canoe Indians," fully at home on Ucayali and adjacent waters. They practice slash-and-burn horticulture, raising sweet manioc and plantains for carbohydrates on the land near the river; they also hunt and fish the river for aquatic protein. They are, like more riverine tribes, not terribly familiar with the surrounding jungle and are ill at ease within it.

A complex oral tradition still persists among elements of the population. It reflects, as readers will see, the influences of the Arawakan- and Tupian-speaking Indians that surround them. It is surprising that only a few fragments of that tradition have found their way into the standard compendiums like Karsten (1964) and

Steward (1946,1947, 1948a, 1948b, 1949, 1950). None were used by Lévi-Strauss when he worked up his massive *Mythologiques* (1969, 1973, 1978). I hope that adding the rich Shipibo variants to the literature justifies this exercise. But before introducing the myths I should describe the region in which the Shipibo dwell-the Peruvian montaña- and the Shipibo themselves.[1]

The Peruvian Montaña

The Peruvian montaña includes the highly variable terrain from the eastern slopes of the Andes, with their high, arid, cold, and rugged topography; through the *ceja de la montaña*, literally "eyebrows of the forest," a cloud forest of low trees and bushes entwined in a mat of vines and festooned with many epiphytes; to the flat alluvial lowlands of the upper Amazon drainage system and its broad, muddy, meandering rivers like the Ucayali, rich with the silt of the Andes. The Ucalayi is formed by the confluence of the Urubamba and the Tamboo rivers, which flow form the southern Peruvian highlands. It rapidly descends through gorges and boulder-strewn beaches until it reaches the mouth of the Pachitea River. Swelled in size and now more sluggish in movement, the Ucalayi meanders northward until it joins the Marañon near Iquitos and forms the Amazon proper. Sauer sets the topographic scene surrounding the Ucalayi and nearby rivers:

The broadly triangular basin of the Amazon, between the Madeira, Yapura, and Ucalayi rivers, the latter following the foot of the Andes, is a vast network of convergent, heavily meandering, and heavily flooding and depositing streams. The interfluve areas, however, are of markedly higher land, somewhat ridged by dissection of deeply weathered sediment, in part a gently rolling country of low hills. (1950:324)

This region is covered by a classical triple-tiered tropical rain forest, although it is distinguished from the *Hylea* (typical rain forest) proper by being slightly higher (around 170 m. above sea level near Pucallpa on the central Ucalayi (, cooler, and dryer than the humid forests of the central Amazon. A dry season of sorts occurs from April or May to August. At the end of August or early September, perhaps only 10% of the terrain around the Shipibo is water (Bergman 1974:210); travel by canoe is difficult through log-strewn and nearly empty *caños* (inlet-outlet streams) connecting the myriad channels and oxbow lakes of the region. In compen-

sation, fishing is easiest during this time, for the fish are concentrated as the follow the retreat of the waters. Then the rainy season begins in the form of torrential cloudbursts "relieved" by demoralizingly steady showers. The rivers swell to ugly brown monsters that in a bad flood overflow even the tallest bluffs of old alluvium, where the Shipibo huts (i.e., those of the lucky ones who found space) are located. At that time Bergman (1974:210) estimates that as much as 99% of Shipibo terrain might be water, making fishing and agriculture difficult but vastly increasing the ease of canoe travel. Indeed the whole landscape appears as one gigantic waterway. It is a miserable time, with people squatting on their raised house platforms, swatting mosquitoes and feeling bored. In a bad season the waters lap around the floorboards, and anaconda swim by in the night and make off with tethered chickens in a confusion of sleepy shouts, flying feathers, and splashing water.

As one progresses further south, upriver, past the mouth of the Pachitea, one notes a change in topography as the flat stoneless alluvium gives way to smaller, more rapidly coursing rivers of higher elevation and stony beaches. The climate also becomes cooler, for one is approaching such low outliers of the Andes as the Cerros de Iparía.

Throughout this region the virgin forest itself belies one's Tarzan images of a tangled riot of vegetation. Instead, the forest giants like the *lupuna* reach with their umbrellalike tops 50-70 m. above the forest floor. Above, on the upper side of the forest canopy, all is light and screeching animation, as troops of monkeys and flocks of parakeets and macaws feast on many different kinds of fruits. Below, in the gloom of the forest, all one sees are the mighty buttressed roots of the forest giants and the spine-covered trunks of the lesser palms disappearing upward into the darkness. Few flowers adorn the scene and less vegetation. Thus one can see for a surprising distance and move about fairly freely. It is only when the forest is cut down, as in a garden plot, or interrupted, as over a narrow stream, that the nightmare jungle of secondary growth explodes in the newfound light. It can take hours to cut a trail through this organic chaos, slashing ineffectually at a solid mat of hanging vegetation. It is here that the traveler becomes uncomfortably aware that everything in the forest is out to get a piece of him. All vines have thorns or nests of stinging ants. For good reason the Shipibo avoid the forest, sticking close to their

paths or to the lakes and rivers that give them free movement and vistas.

Aboriginally the area was not rich in large terrestrial game animals, and it is even worse now, thanks to the depredations of the international pelt market. Tapir, peccary, and agouti were present, and jaguar and ocelot could be found in the interior of the interfluves. As elsewhere in Amazonia, however, the arboreal fauna play a more important role as dependable, everyday food resources. Several species of monkey, including howler, capuchin, and spider, chatter through the upper canopy high above one's head, as do edible birds like *paucar*, toucan, and macaw. It is in the rivers and lakes, however, where the Shipibo and other riverine Indians of the region get the bulk of their protein. The fish range from the gigantic *paiche* and *zungaro* (monstrous teleost and catfish, respectively) to the smaller but more abundant *boca chica*, *paña* ("piranha"), and *bagre.* Aquatic mammals are also found. Some, like the manatee, are eaten; some, like the dolphin, prohibited.

The Shipibo

Traditionally, the Shipibo occupied the middle Ucalayi, from Cumaría in the north, where the closely related Setebo began to be distributed, to the mouth of the Pachitea in the south, where the equally closely related Conibo began their sway. The Setebo are now culturally extinct, having amalgamated with the Shipibo; the differences that once separated the Shipibo from the Conibo are also disappearing through intermarriage and the mutual pressure of acculturation from the surrounding mestizo populations. Formerly there were hostilities between all of these groups, but now relations are cordial and only minor dialectical differences remain to distinguish them.

Tessman (1928) visited the central Ucalayi in 1923 and 1925, after the devastation of the rubber boom that had swept the area at the turn of the century and had greatly reduced the riverine Panoan population. At that time he estimated the Shipibo population at 1,300; the Conibo, 1,200; and the rapidly dwindling Setebo, at only 360. Ever since the date, however, the Shipibo-Conibo population has been rising. This is contrary to the sad experience of many Amazonian tribes who have seen their populations drop below replacement level from warfare or disease and who are con-

scious of themselves as doomed races, forced to make painful adjustments to a declining demography. The reasons the Shipibo do not share this history are various. Their pride and self-consciousness as a group both limits intermarriage and hence amalgamation with the surrounding mestizos and stimulated pronatalism despite their knowledge of herbal contraceptives (Hern 1976). The matriarchal tendencies of the Shipibo result in women plaing a much greater public and economic role than they do in other Amazonian tribes; hence they have a greater say over the consequences of their own fertility. Unlike dwindling tribes like the Cashibo, who practice female infanticide, the Shipibo prize infants, particularly female ones (Wistrand-Robinson 1977:127). Girls, because of the sexual division of labor, can earn money by participating as craftswomen in the tourist market for textiles, beadwork, and pottery. This inducement to keep female infants is further strengthened for their mothers by the prevailing fact of matrilocal residence, which keeps that money in the matriarch's compound, available to a certain extent for mutual use.

This does not mean, however, that knowledge of contraception is limited. Indeed it is highly elaborated and effective (Hern 1976) as is generally the case when women have some say in their own fertility. Yet Hern's (1977:357) report on the Shipibo village of Paococha (Paucocha) indicates a thriving and increasing population. The 1940 census revealed 2,500 Shipibo, 3,000 Setebo (although by that time many of them had merged with the Shipibo), and 3,000 Conibo (Steward and Métraux 1948:559-563). At present a combined population (Shipibo-Conibo) of 16,000 has been estimated (Chirf and Mora 1977); I would place the numbers closer to 20,000. This makes the riverine Panoans a fairly numerous tribal system by South American standards. Certainly they are not to be ignored in the montaña, as is tacitly indicated by the government's program in bilingual education (Faust 1973).

Shipibo villages are linear affairs that sting out along the high ground on the natural levees and old alluvial bluffs that border the meandering Ucalayi. There they are close to water to which they descend by machete-cut clay steps to their moored canoes, to fish, bathe, and wash clothes. The Shipibo are clean; they bathe themselves several times a day to refresh themselves, for the climate is sticky and enervating. The "village" displays little cohesion and in reality consists of a series of linear "nodes," each node composed of a cluster of several rectangular houses with thatched, hipped roofs.

They Are wall-less and have raised palmwood slat floors and are clustered around each other-together with small floorless ceramic worksheds, cooksheds, and chicken pens-in the center of a carefully swept plaza (Hern 1977:358). People sleep at night in cotton mosquito nets, which it is the women's task to roll up every morning and set up every night. There are few belongings on the slat floor; most valuable things like shotguns, machetes, and arrows are stuck in the thatch out of children's reach. Usually the only thing visible on the floor is an old wooden or cardboard suitcase used to "protect" the family valuables. Because it is unlocked and the children regularly paw through its contents in search of playthings, the longevity of any such valuable is usually very short.

Surrounding the swept plaza is the green wall of the banana and plantain house garden. Lathrap (1977: pls. 1-3) has discussed the sophisticated experimentation with plants that goes on in this garden, with its many fruit trees and bushes, at the conservative Conibo village of Painaco. Even in the comparatively acculturated village of San Francisco de Yarinacocha, I made the following inventory of useful plants growing around the houses of a single compoung and in the house gardens associated with the plaza: *remoininte, mokura, nevois, piñon,* and *húastë* (all medicines); *masën* ("gourd"), *teoŝh* ("bead plant"), and cotton (industrial plants); and guava, lemons, oranges, breadfruit, pineapples, cashews, *shahuëviare* fruit, *cumasëna* fruit, *caimito* fruit, *obilla* fruit, aji peppers, sugar cane, and *mami* fruit. The *chacras,* or slash-and-burn sweet manioc, plantain, and maize gardens are as complexly intercropped as the house gardens and are often found a half hour's walk away from the compound. As is usual in the tropical forest, men clear the *chacras,* and women harvest them and bring in firewood.

The huts of the plaza actually form the separate remains of the aboriginal *maloca,* or communal hut. That hut may have broken up owing to acculturative pressures, but its respective parts have not moved far. They consist of the house of the matriarch and her husband (if resident) and the huts of her adult daughters and their in-married husbands and their children. Residence is thus matrilocal (Campos 1977:57; Roe 1980a:51).

As early as 1764 the Shipibo were noted as living in family groups (Amich 1854:239), thus demonstrating the antiquity of the pattern. Skinner (1805:409) mentions the same tendency toward a household community prior to 1800, a situation that even the

periodic missionary resettlement programs failed to modify. These families were scattered in communal houses each of which contained an extended matrilineal family of perhaps 10 persons per hut. The mid- to late 19th century witnessed the disruptive effects of the rubber boom, which resulted in the abandonment of the communal house and the adoption of the present hut style from the rural Peruvians, one hut for each nuclear family. Tessman (1928:11-12) recorded this scattering of settlement pattern after many Shipibo workers had withdrawn from the plantations in the early 20th century. Today these smaller houses are the common Shipibo house type, although a few of the old dirt-floored pëshëwa (aboriginal huts) remain in every settlement.

Interaction is heavy within the compounds, as mother and daughters visit back and forth and frequently work together on the same house platform while their children play indiscriminately among the closely spaced huts. In stark contrast to this cozy intracompound atmosphere, adult visits to other compounds are fleeting, mostly walk-throughs, and the children are rarely found outside of their own compounds. Sometimes the residents of one compound will not even know the people of a compound several units over, particularly if they are new arrivals; and there is not infrequently a certain degree of friction or ill-feeling between members of different compounds. Connecting the circular compound nodes of the village is a narrow sinuous footpath, its openness or tangles and overgrown aspects forming an eloquent commentary on the state of social relations between the compounds it connects. A Shipibo village can go on for kilometers as one encounters first one hut, then another, then three, then another, and so forth. In such a situation village fissioning is very easy, a compound or compounds simply picking up and leaving for up or downriver, where they will either establish their own village or move in with relatives.

Although warfare may have caused villages in the past to be larger, more concentrated, or more cohesive, there is little not to keep them together. Today the Shipibo are hard put to keep their largest villages, like San Franciso de Yarinacocha, together, the political scene being riven with factional squabbles, usually with religion as the pretext (Protestant versus Catholic) even though most Shipibo are only nominal believers at best. There is mention of Shipibo village chiefs in the remote past (Izaguirre 192201929, 1:271-273, 2:90-95), but the extent of their powers is hazy and

there was clearly no intervillage, much less overall, tribal political organization.

Descent was, and to a degree still is, matrilineal (Karsten 1964:185-186) "with some clan features" (Steward and Métraux 1948:556), but it is clear from an examination of the kinship terminology (Tschopik 1958:938) that the system has been gradually shifting from a unilineal to a more cognatic mode. The major form of the family found today among the Shipibo is the matrilineally extended family with its nuclear segments occupying separate but proximate houses. Most unions are monogamous today, although a comparatively wealthy man like a native school teacher is not above keeping two wives in separate villages. Traditionally only the chiefs practiced sororal polygny; ordinary men contented themselves with a single wife (Karsten 1964:186).

Early marriage was-and in the more conservative Pisqui group (Pisquibo) of a northern tributary of the central Ucayali still is (Campos 1977:56)-a Shipibo-Conibo characteristic. The proposing by a boy was often done through a male intermediary when the intended was but a small child (Karsten 1964:186). Giving the mother rather then the father of the girl the decisive voice in deciding a suitor's eligibility makes the Shipibo anomalous among tropical forest tribes. I can recall instances in which rebellious daughters tried for months to reject young swains their mothers have picked for them only to acquiesce in the end.

Childbirth traditionally took place in a small temporary hut made in the *chakra* near the huts of the compound. The mother was assisted by some older woman who cut the child's umbilicus with a sharp bamboo knife (*paca köntsö*) and assisted in smearing the newborn genipa (nanë). Today some women will have their babies in their houses but still adhere to the applications of the black dye. After the delivery the woman and her child were taken back the house, where for two or three days the mother had to abide by certain dietary restrictions (essentially abstention from eating salt and certain fish). The father also obeyed the food taboos and had to remain inactive about the house for the same length of time in a mild form of the couvade. He particularly had to refrain from handling a machete or other dangerous tool for fear he would harm the child (Karsten 1964:194).

From soon after birth until about three months of age the newborn had to wear two short balsa boards wrapped in cotton-filled cloth (*baquë vetánetti*) placed over its head to produce a mild

form of frontal-occipital skull deformation. This is rarely done today on main-river village children because the mestizos make fun of the custom, but the practice still flourishes in isolated tributary populations like the Pisquibo (Campos 1977:56). The skull press produces what the Shipibo regard as an attractively broad forehead and an elegantly sloping profile. Ligatures, or *jonshë*, were also placed on the girls' ankles, and many adult women still wear them as an adornment.

Child rearing ranges from highly permissive and affective to neutral and withdrawn, punctuated by physical punishment when a mother's patience snaps. The punishment only occurs at the toddler stage, but the most common response to a difficult child is simply to ignore it. A particularly lusty child frequently bawls away for the better part of the day while its mother silently works on beadwork or assumes some other task nearby without paying the slightest attention. Another frequent image is the sight of an enraged and screaming child toddling after its mother on a jungle path while she walks unconcerned. Yet on other occasions mothers will dote on their children, particularly infants, and sing them soft lullabys. Slightly older children are often in the care of "child nurses," usually a mother's elder daughter, while young sons join a play pack or accompany their fathers fishing on the river.

Little marks the male transition to adulthood. Instead the culture's emphasis is clearly on the female, for the major aboriginal ceremony was the female puberty rite, the ani *Ŝhrëati* (literally, the "big drinking"), which took place on a girl's first menstruation about the age of 10 or 12 years. This was a major ceremony, which lasted for three days and involved much drinking of *masato* (lightly alcoholic manioc beer), dancing, singing, and fighting. The height of the ceremony was a radical clitoridectomy, performed on the inebriated girl by an older woman specialist with the same *paca köntsö* that was used to cut her umbilicus as an infant. This ceremony has largely passed out of currency on the main river, the last one in the San Francisco de Yarinacocha area having been held in the 1950s, because of the universal horror with which the local mestizos and missionaries regarded this "savage" custom. Yet in many ways it was the high point in a girl's life; thereafter she was ready for marriage.

After the girl had recovered, which could take several months depending on the skill of the surgeon, a new feast-a nupital

feast-was held for the girl, again to the accompaniment of much drinking and dancing. (Karsten (1964:192) maintains that after the bride was handed over to her groom all those assembled watched the consummation of the marriage, but I could get no confirmation on this from my informants. This ceremony is now much abbreviated. Now that raiding has ended, adult life passes uneventfully for males and females alike save for the constant diversion of amorous intrigues and the periodic manioc beer bashes (unfortunately much compressed these days owing to the availability of *aquardiente*-sugarcane whiskey) that serve both to allieviate boredom and to vent aggressions.

Dead infants traditionally were places in an urn and buried beneath the house floor, whereas adults were buried in canoes (Tessmann 1928:215), an obvious imitation of a Western coffin. When a woman died her pots were "killed" or broken (1928:215) and buried with her. Her cookshed, and presumably her pottery shed as well, were burned alongside her house. If a man died his effects was also burned, along with his clothes and other personal effects (Karsten 1964-206). Women keep up a ritual keening for the dead for at least a day and a night while a vine, *sachaho,* is burned as an incense, its pungent smoke keeping the ghost(s) away as people sit by the corpse during the night, Spanish-style white candles burning by its head and feet. Near relatives serve *aguardiente* or *masatos* to guests who drop by to pay their respects. By morning many men are roaring drunk and inevitable fights break out.

Sometimes old people who have perhaps lost their spouses and who are tired of life retire to their mosquito netting and refuse food or drink until they expire. In one case I witnessed, an old man systematically sold all his belongings to help defray the funeral expenses his sons would incur.

A widower can remarry after a suitable interval, but a widow cannot remarry right away. She must shave her long hair and abstain from wearing any ornaments like her labret, nosepiece (*rësho*), or white bead belt (*morochënëŝhëti*). "When her hair has regrown, a year to a year and a half later, she is dressed in a ceremony with her former accouterments and can remarry" (Karsten 1964:207).

This bare ethnographic sketch does not reflect the unique beauty of the Shipibo way of life, a product as it is of the pride of the women, almost as leonine in their presence. They are responsible for the visual art that graces nearly every aspect of Shipibo mate-

rial culture and provides it with its unique ethnic stamp. The men too play a role in the peculiarly Shipibo elaboration of nearly all aspects of their culture by being largely responsible for the verbal art, from songs to myths and folktales. No sketch of Shipibo culture could therefore be complete without a résumé of their art.

The Shipibo and their close relatives the Conibo have what is probably one of the most elaborate and flourishing polychrome pottery traditions in the Amerindian world today (an outline of this tradition can be found in DeBoer and Lathrap 1979). The coil-built ware comes in a variety of size modes (often three) and is divided between the culinary ware for cooking (although metal pots have made inroads into this ware in the more acculturated villages) and a polychrome service, or fine ware, that has resisted replacement (Lathrap 1970:182-183). Indeed there is a flourishing dual market (Roe 1976L83, 1979:215) whereby the poorer specimens often get shunted into the tourist market (Lathrap 1976), whereas the better works serve the international market for private use or gifts and are not sold as in the external market. What is important about this pottery tradition is not only its beauty and cash value but that its manufacture requires only raw materials, from resins, clays, and tempers to the firewood for firing it and the little pebbles used to polish it that come from 400 km. away along the central and upper Ucayali (DeBoer 1975). The Shipibo-Conibo are required to control, or at least be free to travel along, hundreds of kilometers of riverway to make their elaborate pottery. Thus in the very fact of its existence Shipibo-Conibo pottery stands as a testament both to their traveling inclinations and their political-geographic importance in the region.

In addition to pottery, Shipibo women produce complex diagonal beadwork (see frontispiece) made of imported glass beads, and weave cotton textiles decorated with the same intricate geometric designs found on the ceramics (Roe 1980a:53). Traditionally, they also painted their faces, hands, and feet and the faces of their men with closely similar designs. The designs (*quënëa)* themselves are geometric and symmetrical and are based on a cross motif. Although now the designs are largely decorative, they may have once possessed an iconographic meaning (Girard 1958:240). The Piro Indian designs on the jacket of this book are demonstrably derivative from Shipibo-Conibo canons and show zoomorphs transforming into geometric designs, so that same could have happened with the Panoan systems. Each Shipibo woman is

under a powerful cultural "aesthetic imperative" (Roe 1976:81) to produce designs that are both technically competent and aesthetically interesting (Roe 1980a:57). Women do not repeat designs. Well-known artists are admired and visited, and their output is collected and saved (Lathrap 1976:203).

Shipibo men, in contrast, engage in wood carving, making *macanas*, sword-clubs (*huino*), canoe paddles (*huinti*), and pipes (*shinitapon*) in addition to a whole set of other utilitarian things such as dugout canoes, wooden mortars, two-tone signal gongs, and *chapo* (plantain drink) agitators. In all these crafts there is a strict sexual division of labor in which Shipibo culture assigns the men the role of technological specialists and the women the role f artists. Furthermore, the two are interdependent, a man handing the sword-club he has just carved to his wife, who draws the design he will then patiently incise into the wood to make a completed *huino*. The force of public opinion is against the transgressors of this system (chiefly a few male artists) and effectively circumvents them by directing their output into the tourist market only (Roe 1979). The women whose villages are accessible to tourists can make a tidy sum from their activities, but the men, outside of selling a few string-decorated fake lances and toy bow-and-arrow sets to the tourists, must make their cash by engaging in lumbering,, field clearing, the selling of salted fish and sarsaparilla (Hoffman 1964:270, 275), plantains, or jute (Campos 1977). In general, however, the men's participation in the cash economy is still limited; they remain subsistence fishers and horticulturalists.

The Shipibo maintain an extensive and flourishing oral tradition that is chiefly the creation of the men. Although some young people in the most acculturated villages like San Francisco de Yarinacocha near Pucallpa are losing touch with these traditions, many adults still know and recite these tales. Many versions of Shipibo texts have been published by the personnel of the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL), which maintains a big base on the other end of Yarinacocha (the large oxbow lake the Shipibo village is situated on) but these have been collected mainly for descriptive linguistic analysis and have not yet entered the anthropological literature (see Davila and Bardales 1973; Eakin 1973, 1974a; Loriot 1975; Loriot and Davila 1974; Loriot and Hollenbach 1970; Ochavano and Davila 1976; Ramirez and Eakin 1973). Many of these contain mythic information, as do the works of Burga Freitas (1939, 1967), and Odicio Roman

(1969). Yet based on my work with Shipibo lore it is safe to say that the surface has merely been scratched, and many more myths and mythic variants await recovery. Additional work needs to be done on relating Shipibo myth to Panoan cosmology in general (Levy 1979) and to that of the surrounding Arawak and Tupian groups (Weiss 1975:481-508).

The Shipibo-Conibo also have a highly developed and beautiful song style that runs the gamut from shamans' curing songs rich in the animal symbolism of *ayahuasca*-induced visions, to the lyrical love songs and soft lullabys (Eakin 1974b; Lucas 1970; Willis 1975). Both men and women adopt a curiously haunting falsetto mode, and there is nothing so eerily beautiful as listening to an inebriated couple singing a falsetto duet in the moonlit plaza late at night. It is sad to report that many young people, especially those in the more acculturated villages, are more drawn to the popular Peruvian nationl and highland tunes, which they get over a few functioning transistor radios, than they are to their native song style. The related Shipibo dance style has, so far as I can tell, degenerated into a shuffling parody of rural Peruvian *rondas* and similar forms.

The Myths

Because I have relied a good deal on secondary research in constructing the model's general applicability, I thought it wise to present here some of the firsthand data I obtained in the field and that initially set me to thinking about these problems. The texts of these eleven Shipibo myths will also serve to provide a richness of content to supplement the rather arid descriptions of the model. Rather then boring the readers with a detailed analysis of each myth in relation to the model, I leave that to the reader.

Each myth is actually a close paraphrase rather then a literal translation of the original rendering, thereby preserving the fluency and integrity of the original. The myths were tape-recorded in the field from trusted informants, then transcribed verbatim into a phonetically simplified version of written Shipibo developed by the SIL (Faust 1973). With the aid of a literate Shipibo field assistant, Jośe Roque, a literal interlinear Spanish translation was then made. Next, I translated this literal Spanish translation into English, constantly cross-checking in Shipibo and Spanish to ver-

ify the results. Thanks to the translatability of myth (Levi-Strauss 1963:206) and the care with which the translations were done, I am confident that despite have gone through the filters of three languages these myths retain their essential substance and even a little bit of the flavor and candence of the original Shipibo version. In accordance with Dundes's (1971:297) strictures about obtaining "native exegesis" of the various points brought up in the bare text, I went back to the original informant in each case and asked him or her to clarify specific points.

I should also mention something about the performative context in which the myths were told and conditions that surrounded their recording. Generally the myths told by Eduardo and Lucio were more formally elicited than the others. These men came from a compound unrelated to the two other compounds used in this study. To record the myths they told, my field assistant and I walked down to their end of the long lineal village of San Fransisco and paid both men a small fee. The situation was formal no audience was present except for a few children and, in one case with Eduardo, a small and only partially attentive group consisting of his daughter and her husband. Both men grew up in the vicinity of Callería, a small east-bank tributary of the Ucayali about a day and a half boat ride downriver (north) from San Fransisco. These two men, like the other informant, heard their myths from either their father or maternal uncle. Lucio is a man in his 40s, vigorous if somewhat predatory of mind and articulate of speech. Eduardo is an old man around 60, and his renditions suffer the old man's problem of being rather prolix, repetitive, and syntagmatically confused.

The myths told by Manuel and his wife, Ibarista; José, my field assistant; and Juan, his father, were all recorded spontaneously and no fee was requested by them. I have lived and worked on and off for ten years among the two compounds this set of informants represents. They are all close friends of mine, and the conditions of myth elicitation were, accordingly, very natural. This involved sitting around the fire at night and talking of other things, during the course of which the topics of myths were raised. I would then ask for and get a recitation and tape-record it as it went no. In all cases the informants were relaxed and genuinely interested in the tale they were telling. In addition they were recounting the myth for an appreciative audience that included their children, their children's spouses and children, and the ethnog-

rapher within the context of the matrilocal extended-family compound.

Manuel, whose version of the Cumancaya myth is cited in the text and who told the *Yanapuma* myth (myth 9), is highly intelligent but a trifle moody and does not like to recite myths. His myths therefore tend to be rather terse. He defers to his wife, Ibarista, whose knowledge of Shipibo oral traditions is encyclopedic. Moreover she is an excellent storyteller, and her versions usually are very long, internally consistent, and delivered with considerable skill intonation and phrasing. José, who limited stock of myths went into the general ethnographic background information I used for this study and who told the "How We Learned to Paddle" myth cited in the text, is rather young and acculturated. He is rightfully modest about his command of traditional lore, although he is keenly interested in learning about and preserving Shipibo knowledge. Both Manuel and Ibarista are in their 40s and are very traditional in their interests, although Manuel has had considerable experience with anthropologists, including Lathrap, his students, and Hoffman and Bodley. Juan, José's father, is a superb storyteller and glories in the copious sound effects that grace every Shipibo myth and which I have tried to reflect in my paraphrases. His myths too went into background information implicitly cited in the text. These myths represent just the tip of the iceberg in Shipibo oral literature, so, as research continues, some of my assertions may prove incorrect. What is presented here does at least reflect a cross-section of the Shipibo conceptual universe.

Being aware that the collection of variants of a single tale is crucial for structural analysis, I took care to collect different versions of the same myth, such as the two myths about the Pleiades, myths 7 and 8, which contain very similar tapir-World Tree episodes. The various animal seducer myths also repeat key episodes, such as the depressed woman seeking death in the jaws of the jaguar.

Collecting these myths I began to think about the acquisition of oral texts from informants in various states of acculturation. Perhaps the objectivity a certain amount of acculturation produces may be conducive to the collection of oral traditions rather than a hindrance as might be supposed. This of course is true only if acculturation has not gone so far as to produce people with only slight knowledge of and interest in their traditions. I experienced

little difficulty eliciting myths in San Francisco, the largest and most acculturated Shipibo village on the Ucayali. Naturally, the time I have worked in this village and my rapport with my informants helped, as did my obvious interest in such material.

In contrast, Campos and Abelove, who have worked with the most conservative Shipibo on the central Ucayali-the Pisquibo downriver from San Francisco-and then several days upriver on the Pisqui, a western tributary of the Ucayali, and who must have had similar rapport with their informants, experienced considerable difficulty getting Shipibo myths (personal communication 1976). I should add, however, that their specific research designs focused on other topics. Dumont (personal communication 1978) found it almost impossible to collect myths from the Panare-Indians who are more "aboriginal" in their contact situation than either Shipibo or the Pisquibo-despite a research design specifically geared to the collection and analysis of myths. In spite of his long residence among them, the Panare simply refused to impart any myths at all. These are merely a few incidents, but they show high to moderate to low acculturation paralleling high to moderate to low ease of securing mythic information. This suggests to me that truly uncontacted peoples either are unwilling to divulge to outsiders what they consider to be sacred information or have so internalized the myths that they cannot readily elucidate them to others outside their tradition. (2) Those who have at least some familiarity with others and their divergent traditions, on the other hand, bring a certain objectivity to their heritage, which results in both a greater desire to share those traditions with other and a greater care for translatability, which expresses itself in more schematic outlines, greater redundancy, and tighter syntagmatic structure.

Perhaps that is why the most coherent as well as the richest account of a native cosmology in South America, that of the Desana, results from Reichel-Dolmatoff's (1971) use at least initially of a single relatively acculturated informant, Antonio Guzmán. Clearly such is not a case of native models being translated by an anthropologist into his own model at a third degree of removal. Instead Guzmán, tidying up the "native model," was as much an anthropologist as Reichel-Dolmatoff. By this time, of course, the model begins to look a little made up in its neatness and sense of closure, but to say that a model is something made up to account for nebulous data is not necessarily an admission of falsity. As

Geertz points out, it has a function. But, despite being actor-oriented

anthropological writings are themselves interpretations, and second and third order ones to boot. (By definition, only a "native" makes first order ones: it's *his* culture)…. Anthropological works based on other anthropological works (Lévi-Strauss', for example) may, of course, be fourth order or higher, and informants frequently, even habitually, make second order interpretations-what have come to be known as "native models." They are, thus, fictions; fictions, in the sense that they are "something made," "something fashioned"-the original meaning of *fictiô*-not that they are false. (1973:15 and note)

In this taxonomy, because of the marginality of Guzmán and his remarkable objectivity with regard to his own dimly remembered culture, *Amazonian Cosmos* is truly the work of *two* anthropologists, one interpreting the distillations of another, albeit amateur, one. Thus it is a fourth-order derivation. While this may explain its elegance and coherence, it does not consign it to illusion.

Some have used the methodological shortcomings of the Desana material to impugn its authenticity. Yet (a) my conversations with other who have worked among closely related groups (T. Langdon, personal communication 1977, on the Barasana) where, with some reservations (see Hugh-Jones 1974), Reichel-Dolmatoff's and Guzmán's account works fairly well; (b) the close congruence between these people's accounts and that of Torres Laborde's (1969) admittedly short fieldwork with the Barasana; and (c) Reichel-Dolmatoff's (1975) work, which is based on actual field study-albeit limited in duration and focused in scope-with the Desana and other Tukano groups, all indicate to me that this full and compelling account is "real" enough to be confidently used as comparative material for my model and can provide specific keys to understanding the Shipibo material. It formed the prototype as well as the stimulus for my approach to the Shipibo date.

The following set of Shipibo myths represents merely a selected group of texts out of all those that I have recovered. In this set I have tried to include myths that relate to the concerns discussed in this book: ethnic interactions, relations of the sexes, and major supernatural figures. Both long mythical texts of a serious nature and short humorous folktales are presented here. I have

made no attempt to make this a completely representative cross-section of Shipibo mythology.

Myth 1. The Inca's Daughters

LUCIO: When our people went *barbasco* [a fish poison] fishing, one person did not go with them. He stayed in his house. When the fisherman applied the *barbasco* the fish did not flee. Neither were they able to find any large fish. One boy came to where they were fishing in a beautiful canoe. He was fishing with bow and arrow. As he caught fish and put them in his canoe the small fish turned into huge ones such as the *tucunari* fish. As the others continued poisoning, the boy by himself continued catching large fish. The others began to get very angry. Conversing among themselves, they said, "From where does he come, this boy who is fishing? Why does he catch so much while we catch nothing? Ayamarai! ["dammit!"] Let's kill him." They grabbed him and buried him in the mud. After they had buried him, they also buried his canoe and his paddle elsewhere. They buried everything in the mud mixed with leaves which the river had redeposited. Then they returned to their village.

They climbed back up to their village on the bluff. Meanwhile the one who had stayed behind now left the village with his wife to fish in the vicinity of the port as the others had done. When he got there he heard what sounded like a human crying. It was the cry of a child. "Where does that crying come from?" he asked his wife. "Listen!" he said in a surprised voice. He noticed that the earth moved a little, as if there was something in it. The child cried again. The couple ran to the source of the sound and began to dig. They saw that it was a child. After rescuing the child they washed him. The child began to speak. "There is my canoe; there is my paddle; and there," pointing elsewhere, "are my arrows. Please get them for me." The man then proceeded to excavate and get them. The child said to him as he was getting into his canoe, "After I leave, inside of three days there will be a huge rushing sound-*rirririri!*-from where the sun rises and from where the sun sets. The noise will also come from the north and from the south. It will herald the arrival of a tempest. When that happens, climb up into the top of a *nanë* [genipa tree]." Saying that, he left.

The rest of the village was getting drunk in a fiesta. They were doing a *ronda* ["circular dance"] and singing. The couple went to warn them but the drunkards would not believe them. Then an earthquake came, followed by an eclipse of the sun. The couple climbed up into the *nanë* tree. There the wife, because of her distended belly, which indi-

cated her pregnancy, turned into the bulbous hanging nest of the nacash termite [which typically adorns the genipa tree], giving birth to a male child in the process. In the darkness the man and his surviving son sat on the branches. To see if the flood waters that had come were receding, the man threw a *nanë* fruit below. But as he listened he heard its splash, thus indicating that the water was still there. Later, the water receded completely. The man saw that there was nothing left on earth. Huge crevasses existed where the village had been. All that was left was a large lake.

The man climbed down and said to his child, "Stay there, I'm going to find the others." He searched and searched. The son called to his father, "Carry me!" from the *nanë* tree. "Yes, I'm coming to get you," answered the man. But as the father was approaching the tree, the child turned into a *maëcahua* bird. Because of this, until today the *maëcahua* bird exists [this bird is an evil omen; when it flies near a settlement, the Shipibo get scared and try to kill it, for its call indicates that someone will soon die]. (3)

The man went walking and walking, looking for his compatriots. He walked along the banks of a huge lake. He kept walking but there wasn't anyone. There was nothing to eat. Finally, he found a *quënpo vacu* [a small beer mug] sitting under a tree. He picked it up and stared at it in bewilderment. "From where does this come?" he asked. It was full of *masato* ["manioc beer"] and he drank it. "I will get some more," he said. He wanted to fill his stomach. He reached the river and walked from one meander to the next. He stopped and sipped more *masato* from the *quënpo*. He was still hungry. Then he set out again and walked some meanders more. Another day dawned and he found himself back where he had started. There, awaiting him, was another *quënpo*, full as the one before. He sipped the liquid inside it and wondered again from where it had come since there was nobody about. Hidden, he listened and listened fro one whole day. Nobody appeared. Then he said, "Now I will dig a hole in the earth." He dug and he dug until he could hide himself. He placed some leaves over his head. Then a parrot flew toward him and alighted, looked around, but did not see the man in his hole, and flew away.

Shortly afterward, two women came paddling by in a canoe, one in the bow and one behind, steering, in the stern. They arrived at the port and the one in the bow climbed the bluff, unaware that anyone was there. She then set on the ground a *quënpo vacu* full of *chapo*. The man then jumped out of his hole and grabbed her. The woman cried, "Let me go! Not me!" she said; "you can get the one who stayed behind in the stern because she is the one our father said you could have." But the man did not trust her and did not let her go. When he would not let her go, the woman said, "I am not really the Inca's daughter. He just raised me.

You can take the one in the stern. She is really his daughter." Thus the woman spoke to the man. But when she said this the man still did not let her go. The woman in the stern of the canoe, seeing that he did not want her, paddled off. She said , "He doesn't love me so I will go away." Because she was the daughter of the Inca and the other was only an ordinary woman, we Indians have nothing today.

Myth 2. Anciently, There Was a Woman Who Was Always Being Molested by a Dolphin

MANUEL: Anciently, there was a woman who was always being molested by a dolphin. Every morning early when she emerged from her mosquito netting the woman went down to the shore of the lake to perform her toilet. This included her painting her face with nanë quënëa [designs drawn with genipa juice]. When she would be pretty like that the dolphin would enter her. A little while after this happened the woman began to sleep all day and night.

Worried, her two nephew talked about it. "A dolphin is probably entering the vagina of our dear Aunt with his penis. That is why she sleeps all the time." One said, "I heard the dolphin *pánŝh* [a Shipibo onomatopoeic word meant to mimic the dolphin when it surfaces to expel air from its blowhole]! Thus he came and entered inside of her." As he approached, the woman always began to sleep under the influence of the dolphin's magic: *Hëën, hëën* [a Shipibo word for the heavy breathing indicating that she had fallen asleep]. The two nephews began to say among themselves, "Now let us spy on them." A while later the dolphin came; and the nephews, who had arrows, grabbed them in their hands. One of them grabbed a *macana*.

They arrived at the bank, and when they were hidden-well hidden-the sound of the dolphin was heard. The dolphin came to the canoe landing. It was very quiet for a while as he approached. Some moments later the dolphin climbed out of the water. He emerged and began to approach the woman. When he was very, very close the woman began to sleep- *hëën.* When the dolphin reached her, he entered her. The two nephews then began to approach the copulating couple. The dolphin carried an *iscohina* [an archaic form of Shipibo ceremonial costume whereby a man dressed in a *tari* ("cotton poncho") dangled a bunch of four *isco* tail feathers attached to a glass-beaded necklace suspended over his back. The *isco*, or *paucar* in jungle Spanish, is a starling-sized bird, with a black body and brilliant yellow tail feathers] (4) around his dorsal fin. He wore it thus on his back as he entered the woman's mosquito netting. When he was leaving it afterward, one of the two nephews began to shoot arrows at him with his bow. The dolphin fell

to the ground impaled. He struggled to raise himself on his ventral fins and crawled with great difficulty toward the lake. The other nephew then shot him with an arrow when he was very near to the port. Then he gave the dolphin a blow with his *macana*. The wounded dolphin managed nonetheless to crawl into the water and escape.

Later, the morning of the following day, the two nephews talked among themselves: "What have we done to him; perhaps he is still alive?" Speaking thus, they went in search of him. They saw his body on the front shore of a lenticular island in the middle of the river. It lay amid the driftwood. The tails of the *iscohina* were ruined, as the arrows had entered his back through them. Later, when they had returned, they asked their aunt if she had been dreaming of anybody. "Yes," she replied, "I always dreamed of someone every night." "Who you dreamed about every night was the dolphin and we have killed him," replied the nephews. After this the woman stayed healthy.

Myth 3. The Boa and the Hunter

MANUEL: One day a man who was a very bad hunter set out once more to pursue the game of the forest with his blowgun. He had no luck, as usual, until he approached the shores of a lake. There he noticed a man wearing a *bëpota tari* ["decorated *cushma*" (Peruvian Spanish for a sleeveless tunic)]. This man greeted him and asked him if he would like to accompany him so that the strange man could show the hunter his "real *cushma*." The hunter agreed and they set off, only to finally encounter a huge coiled "Mother of All Boas," the anaconda. This, the man informed the hunter, was his *real cushma*.

The hunter was very frightened, but the man reassured him and said that he would show him how to be a good hunter. The anaconda man first blew through his blowgun, but out of it came only a horde of stinging, poisonous scorpions and spiders. When the stranger blew again, hosts of deadly vipers as well as all the other evil snakes of the jungle poured forth from the tip of his blowgun. He then handed his blowgun to the hunter, whom he instructed to do as he had done. The hunger blew through the instrument and immediately killed a monkey. From that day on the hunter, thanks to his friendship with the anaconda man, always enjoyed success in the hunt and soon became renowned as a great hunter.

Myth 4. The Woman, the Earthworm, and the Jaguar

IBARISTA: It is said that long ago there was a young woman who had a giant earthworm as a husband. Each morning after eating, as was her

custom, she went to sit in her little pottery shed, supposedly to begin making ceramic vessels. She would stay there all day long and only return in the late afternoon to the village. After this went on for some time her mother began to get suspicious and decide to find out what was going on. "Why does my daughter always go work in her pottery shed so diligently?" thought the mother. She wanted to find out what her daughter was really up to. So she want to the hut and saw her daughter squatting inside it. She demanded that her daughter get up and move to one side so she could see what she was doing. But her daughter did not want to move. Seeing her daughter's reluctance, the mother asked the girl why she was always sitting and why she did not want to get up. Again she commanded, " Ho! Move to the side. If you do not I'm going to lift you up myself."

Since her daughter obstinately refused to move, the old woman took hold of her arms and lifted her up with a tug. In that instant a prominent sucking sound was heard as the head of a giant earthworm was yanked out of the young girl's vagina. The earthworm spoke to the astonished mother saying, "I am your uncle." With those words he pulled his head back into his hole and retreated into the earth. Enraged, the old woman turned to her daughter, saying, "So! Now I know why you were always seated! You have a husband that is an earthworm!" With those words the mother hit the child on her buttocks with her ceramic-decorating brush.[5] Then the mother poured boiling water down the earthworm's hole. From deep inside the hole the mother and the daughter could hear the earthworm dying. The young girl then said to her mother, "You have caused me great shame and I will leave the village for the heart of the jungle, where I know that the jaguar will end my suffering by eating me, for I have heard that jaguars eat raw meat."

Early the next morning the girl set out. It was still almost dark beneath the forest canopy. From the obscurity of the trees there came a handsome man dressed in a white *tari*. The man was the jaguar in his human guise. The man asked the girl, "Why are you here?" The girl answered, "My mother has caused me great shame and for that reason I have come to the center of the jungle to look for the jaguar, who will put an end to my suffering." The man replied, "It is I whom you are seeking. I am the jaguar." The girl was startled and inspected him more closely, admiring him. The jaguar then carried the girl off to his abode to rest. The jaguar wanted to copulate with the young girl right away, but he noticed that her vagina was full of baby earthworms. The earthworm had placed his offspring there.

Disgusted, the jaguar searched for a herbal medicine to put in her vagina. He wanted to kill the earthworm's brood so that he could have sex with her. Having obtained the medicine he inserted it into her vagina, and out spilled all kinds of noxious creatures: spiders, scorpions,

vipers, rays, and poisonous lizards. All kinds of bad snakes poured from the girl's vagina. Thus freed, the girl became the jaguar's wife. Later, when he was eating *panguana* [a ground-dwelling bird], he sweetly asked his wife to get him some *chambira* vine [a bothersome species that carries formidable thorns], for he wanted to get rid of a bone that had gotten lodged between his teeth. The girl got the vine and, returning, said to her husband, "Open your mouth; I will get the bone out." The jaguar responded, "Not here; let's go out beneath the tree to do it." "Be careful," he said; "I may lose control of myself under all the pain of having the bone removed. I may revert to my animal self and eat you."

The girl gingerly set about performing the operation while poised ready for flight. She wrapped the vine around the bone and pulled on it several times. Finally, with a mighty yank, she pulled it out-*tisk!*-the sound of its being removed echoed into the forest. The jaguar shouted in pain, "*Hoa!*" The girl jumped away just as the man turned into a big cat. Escaping, she hid around the other side of the tree. The girl was afraid of her husband now, but gradually she calmed down. Angered by her fear, the jaguar said, "Come here; don't fear; I won't eat you."

Relieved the girl approached her spouse and they went off happily together. She bore him two sons, one very large, and the other small. Meanwhile her relatives had been looking for her all this time. One day one of her brothers was searching through the forest and saw a column of smoke. He set off in its direction to find out who was there. Coming to a clearing, he saw her hut and cookshed from whence the smoke was rising. He found his sister alone because the jaguar was out in the forest hunting. The brother asked her, "Why are you here? You're alive. I thought you have been eaten by a jaguar." "Come," said the sister, "I have not been eaten. I'm alive. Your brother-in-law has gone hunting animals in the jungle. It is about time for him to come home now. Quickly, go ahead and eat what I have prepared. Then you must climb into the rafters and hide. If my husband finds you here he will become jealous and kill you." Saying that, she gave her brother something to eat and hustled him up into the rafters to rest.

Just as she had finished, her husband approached the hut from the jungle. He was carrying a heavy peccary on his back. When he entered the house he could smell that another human was there. The jaguar became enraged at this intrusion. Slowly, however, little by little he calmed himself down. He set the peccary near the fire. His wife told him, "Your brother-in-law has arrived for a visit; now don't do anything to him, for he is a real human being." The jaguar, now completely in control of himself, said, "Very well, cook this peccary that I have brought." By this time the jaguar had completely changed back into his human form to greet his guest.

The brother was still afraid and refused to climb down. The jaguar said, "Come brother-in-law, nothing will happen to you, for your sister is here. I will tell you, I am living here happily with her as my wife." The brother climbed down and waited for the food to be cooked. After the peccary was barely singed, the jaguar took his piece. The brother waited for his piece to be better done. The brother was curious to see whether the jaguar would tear at his very rare piece, which had been prepared, as was his preference, almost bleeding, or whether he would eat like a human being. But the jaguar told the human, "Do not watch me while I am eating, for I may lose my senses and revert to my animal self."

At first the brother obeyed the jaguar's wish and was careful to look off to the side, but curiosity soon overcame him as he listened to the noisy sounds of the jaguar eating. He carefully began to watch the jaguar out of the corner of his eye. As he saw the jaguar crouching on the ground slashing into the meat with his huge canines, the brother felt great terror. His sister called out to him then that his piece of peccary was ready. He ate and hastened back to the village.

There he told his mother that he had visited his sister, that she had not been killed by the jaguar but was instead living with him as his wife. The mother said, "You have met her; go and ask her if she is willing to leave him and come back to us tomorrow." The brother set off again that morning. This time he was accompanied by his younger brother. They arrived at their sister's house shortly thereafter. They had hurried to arrive during the early part of the day because they knew that the jaguar would be away hunting in the jungle.

The brothers addressed their sister, saying, "We have come to get you." Their sister replied, "Before you take me with you, you have better return to our mother's house and build four stout layers of wood to make its walls. Turn it into a strongly defended house. The relatives of your brother-in-law are very fierce, and you will not be able to fight against them when they come to bring me back except from the inside of the fortified hut."

The brothers returned with their sister's advice. Their mother agreed, and they set about closing in the communal hut by placing four layers of horizontal and vertical planks between the vertical house posts. After they have finished, the brothers set off with more relatives as reinforcements to recover their sister and her two sons. The girl agreed to go, and she left the jaguar's hut, taking her two sons with her, one at each breast. She also took all of her things.

That same afternoon, when the jaguar returned, he saw that his wife and children had left him. He began to sing. He chanted all night long. He was soon joined by his relatives, who sang with him. Safely inside their fortified hut, the humans awaited the arrival of the jaguar and

his fierce relatives. But they did not come. After two nights of singing, the jaguars prepared to attack.

In the early morning, almost at daybreak, the jaguars arrived in great tumult. They surrounded the doorway and the walls of the hut. The people have left chinks in the walls through which they shot arrows to kill the jaguars. The jaguars tore at the walls with their teeth and claws. After a pitched battle, the jaguars appeared to have lost the day, for many of them lay on the ground dead, full of arrows. Two of the walls had already been ripped away, however, leaving only two layers between the humans and the jaguars. The jaguars, much reduced in number, sill threatened to tear down the remaining walls.

Seeing the plight of his relatives, their leader, the jaguar-husband, said to the people, "Please send out my largest son. If you do, we will let you keep the smaller one and we will go away, back to the forest. If you refuse we will attack again, destroying the remaining walls, and eat you all." The people were afraid, and the girl sent her largest son out, crawling on all fours. The jaguars carried the boy away, and from that day on jaguars and people have been different creatures.

Myth 5. The Woman and the Anaconda

IBARISTA: Long ago, they say, there lived a spinster who was secretly married to an anaconda. Every morning after her bath she would paint herself with *nanë* [a blue-black plant prepared from the fruit of *Genipa americana*] and leave her village carrying a half-gourd bowl. Each morning she would leave with the bowl. One day her brother-in-law saw her depart and thought to himself, "Why does she always carry that gourd with her?" He decided to follow her so that he could find out where she was going and what she was doing.

The woman arrived at a lake not far from the village. Looking all around to make sure no one was watching, she overturned the gourd and placed it on the water. She then beat on it-*tón, tón, tón.* As the sound spread out into the lake, *CincainaI,* the anaconda, answered, "*Hian."* Such was his call. A little while later as he approached the land the water began to roil about and form waves.

From his hiding place, the man could see *Cincaina* approaching. The boa's head was sticking halfway out of the water. Behind it a broad *V* rippled out into the lake. The woman waded out into the water to meet him. She stopped when it came to up to her waist. When the *Cincaina* reached her he began to twine his body around hers in great coils, starting from her legs and soon encircling her whole body. As his forked tounge darted across her neck, *Cincaina,* began to make love to her, inserting the tip of his tail into her vagina.

In his hiding place the man thought, "So this is why she comes here every morning with her gourd bowl." After their lovemaking was over, the boa removed his tail from the woman's vagina, uncoiled her body, and returned to the depths of the lake. As the woman turned around to wade back to the shore, the man hurried away to tell her brother about the episode. When he arrived back at the village he approached the woman's brother and said, "Your sister goes out to meet a boa every morning by the lake shore. That is why she leaves with a half-gourd bowl. She uses it to call the boa, and afterward they make love. I have seen it with my own eyes.

Very early next morning the brother accompanied the man as they both set out for the lake. The brother also carried a bowl, only his was hidden under his *cushma*. When they arrived at the lake the brother took the gourd out and, like his sister had done, placed it upside down on the surface of the water and beat upon it- *tón, tón! Cicaina*, hearing the sound and mistaking it for the woman's signal, answered "*Hian*" and began to approach the shore. The two men awaited him, both wielding long poles, which they had sharpened at one end, thus fashioning them into spears. The water began to be disturbed, heralding the arrival of the boa.

As it got closer and raised its head out of the water to look for the woman, her brother thrust the pointed end of the pole into the middle of its body while the brother-in-law struck it over the head, killing it. The two men then pulled the *Cincaina* up onto the land. Then *nishvin*, a yellow wasp that likes to eat meat, snatched up a piece of the boa's skin and carried it to the village, where it placed the scrap next to the woman. She had not yet left for the lake.

She saw the piece of skin and immediately recognized it as being part of her lover's body. The woman, afraid of what might have happened, ran to get her bowl. She hurried to the lake, where she beat upon the water as she had done so many times before. She called out to the *Cincaina*, but he did not answer. She despaired, thinking, "Perhaps he is dead, for I saw the wasp bring a part of his skin. Maybe *nishvin* brought it to advise me of my lover's death." Filled with suffering and embarrassment, the woman turned into a *shihuango* [a small black bird often seen in the caños].

Myth 6. The Widow and the Tapir

IBARISTA: The first people and animals were capable of speech like we are. When it was thus a woman became a widow. She fled in grief from the scene of her husband's death and was lost in the heart of the forest for a very long time. She had her young boy with her. She lamented,

"The jaguar, who eats raw meat, will eat me. I go in search of him." She was looking for death. Saying this, she went. She left the scene of her husband's death. The tapir was to be like her husband. It was a long time that she was left alone.

She found a tapir in animal form and spoke. "If only he was a man I would stay with him as my husband." Thus she spoke. With her child she was in the middle of the jungle. Later, in the night, the tapir, now transformed into a human, came and touched her in her hammock to wake her up [it is Shipbo custom for a young suitor to gently touch a girl asleep in her hammock to wake her up for lovemaking]. "Who are you?" she said. "I am what you wished I were," the man answered. She responded, "If you were really a person, I will be your wife." "Yes," he said, "I am what you spoke. You spoke to me thus and I have come to you." "I didn't say that to a tapir," she countered, " I said that to an imaginary person." "I am that person," answered the tapir. The woman let him enter her hammock and they made love. He was as her husband. He made plantain *chacra* for her. He made manioc *chacra* for her and other *chacras*as well.

Thus they lived together for a long time. After a while the brother of her dead husband, her brother-in-law, went searching for her. "Where is the wife of my brother?" he asked. "After my brother died where was my nephew carried?" He began searching the depths of the jungle. He followed various paths. Since there were no shotguns then, he carried bow and arrows. As he went he sniffed the air for the scent of the smoke of a cook fire. "Where am I going?" he wondered. Following along he passed a huge plantain *chacra,* an indication that people lived there. Continuing walking, he found a *pëshëwa* [the aboriginal house type that lacked the cross-members and raised floor of the mestizo-influenced house type many Shipibo live in today] and another one to sleep in. The first one was used to store maize. Anciently, thus it was, a small second floor was used to store maize. On entering the bottom floor of the house he saw his nephew seated there.

When the youth heard *chaish!* [the sound of small canes being stepped on], he turned and saw his uncle. "Where is your mother?" asked the man. "It has been a long time that you have been here and I have looked and looked for you. Finally I have found you," said the man to his nephew. "My mother is with my uncle," replied the boy. "They have gone to a dried-up pool to gather the dead fish" [indicating that this episode happened at the end of the dry season], he continued. "Does your mother have a new husband?" asked the man. "Yes," the youth answered, "she does." "How long has your mother been gone?" the uncle asked. "She will be back any time now. Every time she comes back she always asks me if anybody has been here, even while nobody has ever come." When the boy had said this his uncle saw

the huge round and flat tapir tick the youth wore as a *rësho* [a nose pendant in the form of a flattish, convex round piece of metal worn traditionally by both Shipibo men and women]. "Why do you have a tapir tick below your nose?" the man asked. "Come here!" he commanded, "and I will take it off and throw it away." "No, you don't have to throw it away," the boy protested; "my mother stuck it on me as a child." "It is not a real *rësho*," replied the man; "it is a tapir tick." Then he snatched it off the boy and flung it away. After it was thrown away, the boy was left very sad.

I will climb up to the second floor of the hut," the man instructed the boy. "When your mother arrives and asks if anyone has come, you must tell her that no one has. That is what you must say." With those words the brother-in-law climbed up to the storage floor with his arrows in his hands and remained there. From his vantage point he saw a woman coming; *paŝca, paŝca*, the sound of her very thick skirt swished as she approached. The skirt was so thick because there was a lot of tapir pubic hairs in it. The brother-in-law saw that she was carrying a *tasá* [a plaited burden basket with a hexagonal weave] full of fish. When she arrived she unloaded the basket on the ground and asked her son, "has anyone arrived here today?" "No," he replied, "nobody has arrived." Then she got a *quënti* ["cooking pot"] and began to prepare *masato* by kneading the mash with her hands. It was of this size [indicating about 50 cms. with her hands], a *quënti ani* ["large cooking pot"]. She was preparing it for the tapir to drink when he arrived. After kneading it she noticed that her son no longer had his *rësho* beneath his nose. "Where is your uncle's *rësho*?" she asked her son. "I don't know where I lost it" he answered. "Why have you thrown away the *rësho* your uncle gave you?" the woman asked. Then, with her brother-in-law looking on from his hidden position, the woman hit her son on the back of the neck.

The brother-in-law wanted to shoot her with an arrow right then and there but thought, with his bow drawn, that it would be better to wait for her husband and shoot him instead. Then the woman finished preparing the *masato*. The brother-in-law was above her looking in her direction. The *masato* being ready, the woman called to her tapir husband, "Nobody has come; come here *sincainaa!*" [an onomatopoeic attempt in Shipibo to depict her aping the tapir's call]. This she said. The tapir replied, "*Chósh!*" A few moments later came the sound of his feet approaching-"*rique-rique*." He came, not thinking anyone was there. He was a huge tapir with many wrinkles on his snout. He arrived with a *naviro* [twill-weave burden basket made out of palm leaves] and dumped it down to rest. The tapir was thirsty and drank the prepared *masato*. Then he sat down, broadside to the hunter. While has was drinking, his head was down. The woman went to cut plantain leaves to put the fish on.

At the same moment that he was drinking, the brother-in-law was on his knees and let an arrow fly. The *paca pia* [a lanceolate-shaped bamboo hunting and war arrow] entered the middle of the tapir's ribcage- *tsois!* [the sound of the arrow point passing between the bones]. When this happened the tapir cried out, "*Chósh!*" and died. His wife was behind him and cried out in fright, *"Eë!* A *nawa* [the Shipibo pejorative term for an outsider, a savage] is killing my husband!" Yelling this, she went running away. Then the brother-in-law jumped down from the storage floor, grabbed his nephew, and ran away. He was approaching his house, accompanied by his nephew, and ran away. He was approaching his house, accompanied by his nephew, when the woman followed, yelling, "Brother-in-law, you are carrying my son." But he did not wait for her. The youth pleaded with his uncle, saying, "Wait for my mother!" He began to cry. Then the uncle waited, there on the plain, for her. The woman announced her arrival with "*Jo!*" calling, "Brother-in-law, wait for me; you are carrying your nephew." There he waited and acknowledged her arrival with "*Jeë*." Her swishing dress-*paŝhca, paŝhca*-announced her arrival. "Brother-in-law, you are carrying your nephew"; saying this, she arrived. The brother-in-law replied, "Why, after the death of my brother, did you take a tapir as your husband and, in front of me, why did you place that ugly tick under my nephew's nose? And then, why did you hit him in the nape of the neck when it was missing?"

Then he added, "I had thought of shooting you with an arrow too, but I did not and changed my mind." Then he took the bowstring from his bow and began to whip her with it. Then he switched to using his bow and beat her with it until she nearly died. She cried and cried. When she was crying too much he left her there. He took off her *chitonte* [the Shipibo wrap-around tubular cotton skirt] and using the point of his bow, for he wished not to touch the offending garment with his hands, threw it underneath some *caña brava* [a weed with a razorlike leaf and therefore impenetrable]. He threw it away and continued on his way. The woman remained there, utterly humiliated, squatting without her skirt. She only had a blouse on. The brother-in-law took his nephew with him. After this had happened, the man and the young boy arrived at the man's grandmother's house {Shipibo residence is prevailingly matrilocal, and descent matrilineal, so this segment involves a four-generation matrilineally extended family living in a separate compound formed around a communal hut].

When they arrived, the brother-in-law spoke of what had happened. His mother and sisters were there. So the man spoke, "After he, my elder brother, died, his wife remarried a tapir. She was hidden in the depths of the forest and she had brought my nephew with her." Thus, he spoke to his mother, brothers, and sisters. Then his sisters cried "*Eë!"* and came running to get their nephew, as did the boy's great-

grandmother. After she got him she said to her grandson, the man, "Where is his mother?" "I was angry," said the man, "I beat her; I tore off her skirt and threw it away. I beat and beat her until she was almost dead. When her son was crying it made me sad. I was leaving her there. I dumped her. I don't know how she is now," he added.

Two of the beaten woman's sisters-in-law, the man's sisters, then went to get her at the instructions of the grandmother. "Look for her," she said, "your younger brother has left her almost dead." Then, speaking to him, she said, "You have beaten her too severely." Then, the sisters-in-law went calling for her. When they saw her on her knees without any skirt on they felt sorry for her and brought a skirt to put on her. They brought her back to the grandmother's house and bathed her. Then she was completely dressed by them and was given a roast plantain to eat. [Another informant added later that, after such an episode, having been readopted by the family, the woman would have eventually married her brother-in-law.]

Myth 7. An Ancient One and the Children

LUCIO: An old man was making a canoe under the shade of a guayaba tree. Some children were gathering the green fruit above him in the tree. They threw the fruits down on him in an effort to hit him. This they continued to do. The old man got angry. The old man was actually a tapir [*ahua*]. He got up, very angry, and kicked the tree, turning the guayaba tree [which never grows very large] into a tall lupuna tree [a huge tree of great mythical significance to the Shipibo; it houses a powerful, and unless propitiated, malevolent spirit] by the mighty blow from his hoofs.

The children were now stranded and could not get down. "How are we going to get down?" they asked each other. They tried to climb down from the branches of the lupuna, but the trunk was too thick for them to reach around and get a hold on it. The children remained there for some time. One of them then plucked a leaf and said, "I will convert myself into an ant and float down on this leaf." Then they all changed themselves into ants and floated down on the leaf together. When they landed on the ground they turned back into people and saw in front of them a *nanë* tree.

The children then asked the tree, "Where is your owner?" [referring to the tapir]. The tree responded, "He has gone that way," pointing in the direction of his departure. The children then set off in the direction indicated in search of him. Soon they encountered another, but smaller, genipa tree and asked it, "In which direction has your owner gone?" "In the same direction," the tree answered. The children continued

on their way until they found another *nanë* tree, only this time it was only half grown. They asked the sapling the same question and received the same answer as earlier.

They continued walking until they came to a tapir stool. A genipa seed was germinating, sending out its shoots, from the tapir's stool. They asked it the same question as they had asked the trees before, and it gave them the same answer. "Follow on in the same direction." That stool had just been deposited recently, only a day before they had found it. The children arrived at a great river. They continued walking along its banks until they came upon some just recently deposited stool. It was still steaming. The sun was at midday and they soon found the tapir sleeping under a tree. They said to each other, "How are we going to kill him?" They wanted to return the injury they had received from him. As they were looking at him in the distance, one of the children said, "I will turn myself into an ant again." Thus transformed, he set off across the savannah and entered the tapir's stomach through his anus. Once inside he cut off the tapir's heart and killed him.

The children then asked themselves, "How are we going to eat him?" One of the children converted himself into a cooking pot, and his fellows placed him on the fire to boil. But the pot-person was unable to stand the head of the fire, and his companions had to throw him in the river to cool him off. As soon as he hit the water the *quënti* turned back into a person. Another then said he would become an olla. But while the meat was still raw he could not stand the flames either. This was tried several times until the strongest, both physically and magically, was able to endure the heat long enough for the tapir meat to be cooked.[6] The children then ate their full. Afterward they remained on the river bank for a while, wishing to cross it but lacking a canoe with which to do so.

At that moment a person came by. The children asked him to carry them to the other side. He said, "I could carry you but my canoe is very small. It might not be able to hold you all." Then he added, "There is another one, much bigger, and I will call it here. With it you can reach the other side." Saying this, he left. The children called after him, "Don't delay long in returning." When the canoe came the children saw that it was a huge cayman. They said, "*Chiaconi* [spirits use this word to address a friend],[7] we want to go to the other side of the river. We called the other spirit to come help us," they added, "but his canoe was too small. That is why we have called you." The cayman then said, "Come; get on me." They boarded in a file. The children and the cayman then set off for the other side. The children had an idea when they were on the voyage; "Now what shall we transform ourselves into?" they thought. One said, "I will convert myself into a bird." In that very instant he flew away. The others followed suit.

Still others asked themselves, "What shall we become?" One said, "I will change myself into a *picaflor* [Spanish for "a hummingbird"]. The last one said, "I will change into a *panguana*." Saying this, the *panguana* flew off toward the land in an oscillating flight, alternately swooping low and high. He had nearly reached the land when he fell into the water. As soon as he hit the water the pursuing cayman bit off both his legs. Because of that we say of the *panguana* constellation [*quishioma* in Shipibo; part of Orion, it comes out at about 11 P.M. in August] that it lacks legs. All the children flew up to the sky to become stars in this constellation.[8]

Myth 8. The Cayman's Mandible
(*Variant of* an Ancient One and the Children)

IBARISTA: A young man lived with his mother. Even though he was an adult, he did not have a wife. Therefore every night his mother had to arrange his mosquito netting. At first, when she arranged the mosquito netting, she did not find any fruit in it; she was an old woman. One morning, as she was putting the mosquito netting up for the morning, she noticed a *shopan* [a watermelon-like fruit] of this size [indicating about 35 cm. with her hands]. The man was sleeping with it, using it like a vagina. The mother from that time on always had to put the *shopan* aside when she put her son's mosquito netting back in the morning. She set it up, the mother of this man, and put it away in the morning. She always saw that the *shopan* was there. After much time the Old Woman grew tired of this work. She said, "Why is my son always sleeping in this fashion?" Then she got the *shopan* and threw it away. *Po!* it sounded as it fell and broke open. As soon as it had split, two children appeared from inside. They cried. The Old Woman saw that they were two males and was startled.

She said, "They are my children, for I threw the fruit thus." Then she ran to get clothing and dressed the two children. She carried them and placed them inside the mosquito netting. A little later she saw that they were already very large babies. Very rapidly the two children grew. Their aunt gave them lukewarm *chicha* ["maize beer"]. After a little bit they were already nearly adults. They asked her, "What has happened to our mother?" The aunt, afraid they would find out what she had done, replied, "I do not know. I don't know what happened to her." Unsatisfied, they asked her again, "Aunt, who killed our mother?" "I don't know," she answered. "I don't know who could have done so," she repeated. "We want to return the evil deed," the children insisted. Finally the Old Woman was fed up and said that the lightning *yoshin* ["spirit"] did it. The brothers then went and killed the lightning *yoshin*. They went. First they made arrows and then they went and killed

him. They returned from Mount Manaman, where the *yoshin* had lived, and where they had killed him.

They again asked their aunt, "Who has killed our mother?" "I don't know," responded the Old Woman. "Perhaps it was you who killed her," they suggested. "If so," they warned, "we will kill you too." Then the frightened woman said, "The tapir killed your mother." They said, "Then we will look for him and kill him." The two children left.

Following the path they encountered tall plants, indicating that long ago tapir stool had fallen there. They continued following the path and soon saw plants that had only grown to a lesser height, indicating more recent deposition of tapir stool. Once again they resumed following their route. They continued and found tiny plants just beginning to grow from freshly deposited stool. Continuing on, they found tapir stool that was only half dry. It had been deposited only that morning. They walked further and encountered more tapir stool, only this time it was very fresh. They followed the trail some more until they saw the tapir asleep on the ground in the middle of an open grassland. "There is the killer of our mother," they said. They were asking, "How are we going to kill him?" The younger one, because he had much experience, said, "I will convert myself into a *jee* [the Shipibo word for the ubiquitous tiny red house ant, called *pukakuro* in the Quechua-derived jungle Spanish of the area. Despite its small size, the Shipibo stress, and I can attest, the *jee* is the possessor of a formidable bite when aroused]. The two sons had *paca pia* [these Shipibo arrow points could also be provided with handles to function as knives] with them.

The younger one said, "I will cut out his heart with the sharp head of my arrow; I am the *jee*." After conversion he entered the tapir through his anus. Once inside, he said, "I will cut off his heart with this." When it was cut off the tapir gave a death jerk-*pënpën!* "When this happens," the younger brother had originally told the older brother, "you must go very quickly and cut into the tapir's stomach with your *paca pia*, when it gives its death jerk. Then I will be able to leave his stomach." When the younger brother had arrived at the tapir and had entered it through its anus, the elder brother was still some distance off. After the moment of the death spasm-*pënpën!*-he came running to cut into the tapir's stomach. Immediately the younger brother leaped out of the tapir's stomach.[9]

Then they asked themselves, "In what area will we eat him?" They decided to eat him near a water-filled *quebrada*. "I will become a *quënti* and you can cook the meat in me," said the younger brother. "We will eat," said the elder brother. "You have to take me to the shore of the *quebrada*," the younger brother told his elder brother. The two arrived and began putting logs on the

fire. The younger brother then transformed himself into a *quënti*. The fire was now ready. The pot was placed on the
fire and began to crackle. When this happened the elder brother removed his pot-brother from the fire and put him in the water of the *quebrada* to cool. He took him out again and put him on the fire once more. Again, after it had become too hot for his younger brother-pot, the elder brother put him in the water. After a while of doing this the meat was done and the two ate. After eating they saw a sloth on the other side of the *quebrada.*

They asked the sloth to help them go over to the other side. It was very, very far away. The older brother said, "Can I get to the other side by using your lance so that when I thrust it into the water it will dry up and allow us to walk across?" The sloth said, "I will call my *jënenponpo* bird. He has a canoe so you can use it to reach the other side. Later, after calling him, the *jënenponpo* bird arrived with his huge canoe. He said to the brothers, "If you get into this canoe very gingerly it will take you to the other side. When it has reached the other side," he added, "do not jump too hard on its prow as you are leaving it. My canoe is bad and will eat you if you do." When after this was said and they beached on the other shore, the elder brother left the canoe with much care and, turning, said to his younger brother, "You must get out of the canoe in the same manner as I have, for that was what the owner said." But the younger one replied, "I will leave it in this matter!" Saying that, he jumped on the prow-*chorón!* Instantly the canoe became a cayman and bit off his leg and carried it away. The younger brother was left there, sitting on the landing minus one leg.

The older brother admonished him saying, "Just as I had told you, but you would not listen. Now, how are we going to get your leg back?" There, on the other side, the sloth was still sitting. The younger brother asked him, "Will you dry up the river with your magical long lance so we can kill the cayman and get my leg back?" The elder brother left his sibling's side and approached closer to the sloth, yelling, "Will you get your magic lance and come so that the water will be dried up?" The sloth complied. The elder brother then looked all over the exposed mud flats and finally found the big cayman. There he killed him. He brought the body up from the *quebrada* to dry land. He cut its belly open and retrieved his younger brother's leg. The he obtained the cayman's mandible.

"Now," he said, "what are we going to do?" Answering his own question he said, "Now we must ascend to the heavens, but before we do so we must go and ask our aunt again what happened to our mother. Let us go." When they arrived back at their putative mother's house they asked her, "Who was responsible for killing our mother? If you did it we will kill you." Still dissembling, the Old Woman said, "To find out once and for all you must

ascend to the heavens and search there." They replied, "Now then, we are going." Saying this, they went, the elder brother and his younger brother without a leg. They reached the heavens by shooting their arrows, for at that time they sky was very low.

The elder brother shot an arrow and it stuck in the sky.[10] Then he shot others so that they each hit in the middle of the nock of the previous shafts, thus forming a single file of arrows that reached the ground. The elder brother then shot again so that the first arrow landed right next to the first in the sky, and then, one after another, he shot them until the second file was complete and also reached the earth's surface. A ladder was thus formed. Using it, the two brothers ascended into the sky. The elder brother carried with him in his hand the cayman's mandible, thus forming the constellation *huishmavo* [the Hyades]. Thus our old uncles spoke.[11]

Myth 9. The *Yanapuma (Ja Huiso Inon)*

MANUEL: In the past, some people, mostly mestizos, went to work gathering rubber [thus indicating that the "past" here refers to the turn of the century]. Once of them was a Campa Indian. He was also a *meraya*.[12]

All this was to come to pass; the *Yanapuma* [Quechua for "Black Jaguar"; huiso ("black"), *inon* ("jaguar") in Shipibo] was to kill them all. When all the mestizos had left their camp in the jungle to go off and search for latex, the Campa stayed behind in his mosquito netting. The mestizos had already cooked their meal. It was spread out and ready, waiting for them to come back to camp after working. Then a White Man came by all dressed up in a fine black suit coat with a white vest covering his breast. Thus he came. One by one he tasted a little of each of the provisions. The Campa in his mosquito netting saw this; he saw him taste the food as if testing it. When the White Man had finished testing the food, he returned to the forest, passing through the center of the camp.

When the workers returned that evening, the Campa told them what had happened. He asked, "What kind of person could it have been who arrived here and ate a little of the food?" He was afraid. "Do not eat any of what he has left," warned the Campa, but the mestizos paid no attention to him. These things happened. The Campa ate none of the food, while the hungry mestizos ate all of it. The Campa already knew that the White Man had really been the Black Jaguar in his human guise. He also knew that the *Yanapuma* would do harm to the men. The Camp knew what would happen. Thus these things occurred. When the mestizos retired for the night, the Campa remained awake, listening. When it was completely dark he heard a cry, "*Rique, rique, rique, rique*."

At first it was so far away that he could hardly hear it. But gradually it was getting closer and closer. The cry came from the one who had tasted the provisions. "The Black Jaguar is coming," thought the Campa. "The thing that was like a person is coming."

All of the mestizos were snoring. They were sound asleep and did not hear the frightful sound. The Campa tried poking them with his finger to wake them up. It was no good; they continued to sleep soundly. Then, getting more desperate, he began hitting them, but still they did not wake. They were bewitched. When he could not wake them the Campa *meraya* took his small baby boy, whom he had brought along with him, and climbed to the top of a nearby tree. In an effort to escape he climbed and climbed until he had reached the tips of the uppermost branches and could go no further. Then he sat and waited, trembling. He now heard the deafening sound of the Black Jaguar as it arrived in the camp. One by one the animal snapped the nape of the neck of each man with its jaws. The Campa could hear the sound of the breaking bones very clearly. The *Yanapuma* killed them all. The jaguar then counted all of the bodies and began to carry them away one at a time. It took a lot of time to take them all away. The Campa put tobacco in his mouth as a magical aid. Then the *Yanapuma* noticed the Campa and his son in the tree. He came to the base of the tree and began to bite its buttresses with his strong teeth. As he broke them the tree began to shake violently. When it inclined at an angle, ready to fall down, the Campa *meraya* said to his child, "Close your eyes; don't look." He then placed his son on his shoulders and adjusted the boy's arms around his neck. The *meraya* then flew away, leaving the jaguar far behind.

They descended and landed in the left corner of the Campa's plantain *chakra*. They were already on the ground. In this manner the Campa escaped from the *Yanapuma*. He then arrived at his house and said to the neighboring mestizos, "The Black Jaguar has killed all your countrymen." But they did not believe him. "They ate the tainted food," explained the Campa.

Among the mestizos there was a wise Cocama Indian shaman. He was a powerful *brujo* [Spanish for "sorcerer"; *yove* in Shipibo]. He listened to what the Campa was saying and persuaded the others to follow him. They all went to the scene of the incident. There a Campa said, "Here was the terrible event," when they arrived at the encampment. The Cocama shaman was blowing a magical protection. "Here the *Yamapuma* destroyed them all," said the Campa. Then they all followed the wide path the Black Jaguar had made by dragging the bodies off. It was like a roadway, very straight and wide.

The Cocama shaman led the way blowing constantly. Finally they approached a cave inside of which the *Yanapuma* was sleeping. It was the majic of the Cocama's blowing that had put him to sleep. There the mestizos killed the *huiso inon* with shotguns. To make sure he was

dead the Indians hit him with poles on the head. Then they looked around the cave and saw all the cadavers there. There were so many. Some they carried away. Others they were not able to carry away and so left them there.

Myth 10. *Yoashico*, the Miserable One, *Ŝhäno Inca*

EDUARDO: In ancient times the sun stood still in the east. It did not move. People had to put *boca chica* [*Prochilodus sp.*, a favorite fish of the Shipibo] they had caught in the sun on top of a leaf to warm it because they had no fire. Only the stingy one, *Ŝhäno Inca,* had fire. He also had the *paranta* [cognate the Spanish *planto*, "plantain"] and *atsa* ["manioc"]. But he had placed the *shänó* [*jergon* in Spanish-a very venomous viper] in the crotch of the manioc plant[13]. Another *shänó* he had placed around the stem of the manioc plant, while above the ground he had placed wasps in its leaves so that people could not harvest its tubers. It was too dangerous. They asked *Yoashico* for manioc, but he destroyed the eyes of the plant before he brought it to them [it propagates vegetatively]. They planted it in vain; it did not grow. They asked him for the *paranta* shoots [to grow plantain trees], but instead he cut the trunk in three parts and gave it to them. They planted these but they naturally did not grow.

Later, the daughter of the Bad Inca raised a green parakeet, the *vëscón*. One day the daughter was cleaning the plaza around her hut with a broom. The *vëscón* flew behind her and molested her with its cry -"*Shë, shí, shë, shí.*" It was looking to steal a coal from her fire. Then it stole a bit of her fire when she was at a distance. The *vëscón* took it and flew away, low to the ground. She called after him saying, "He is carrying away a coal!" Saying this, she threw her brush at him but he escaped. He flew toward the corner of the *Ŝhäno Inca's chacra* where there was a dead *cumán* tree. There he left the coal on one of its branches. The coal began to start a fire.

Seeing this, the *Ŝhäno Inca* sent a huge tempest with violent rain to put it out, but all classes of birds-the *poincosco* ["turkey vultures"] and *paujil* [the razorbilled curassow, *Mitu mitu*][14] and others-came to protect the fire with their outstretched wings. Before they had tried to protect the fire with their wings, these birds had white plumes. The smoke from the fire turned them black. They hovered over the fire to protect it. The fire was not completely lit. Then the coal fell below, and from there our ancestors took it. They divided little pieces of it among themselves. Then the sun began to rise where they had the fire.

The people asked themselves, "How are we going to get things to

plant in out gardens? Now that we have fire we can cook them. Let us kill *Yoashico* and get the cultigens from him." Thus they spoke. They sent a lizard to work and excavate a hole in the ground. After it was finished, the lizard advised them that it was done. Then they called the miserable one to a sporting arrow match. It was the custom for the Shipibo to stand on one side of a field and shoot arrows at *Yoashico*. He would try to dodge them. Then he would shoot arrows at the Shipibo, who would try to dodge them in their return.

He was in his hut and left it, responding, "*Jejée*" [when a Shipibo man arrives at somebody's house he must make his presence known; then the owner of the house says, "*Johuë*," welcome, and the visitor must respond with "*Jejée*"] and whistling-*vis, vis*.

The miserable one grabbed his bow and arrows and carried them over his head [as was the custom], ready for the match. Jumping up and down-*chorón, chorón*-he came. He came to shoot with bow and arrows at ready. *Querón!* [the sound of him falling into the hole the lizard had prepared]. But when he fell into the hole it only reached up to his stomach and he could get out.[15] The people could not kill him. They were discontented. Then the *jori* bird [a robin-sized bird, green in color with a blue head and a blue-green streak near the beak; it makes deep complex multi-chambered underground nests to hold its young] was called to excavate another hole. They asked him, "Can you make it?" He answered, "Yes, I can." He dug it much deeper than the lizard had. After it was finished, the people called the *Yoashico* out again. As was their custom, they invited him for another arrow exchange. He responded-"*Jejée*"-and came out whistling-*vis, vis, vis*-with bow and arrows at the ready. He came jumping-*chorón, chorón*!

When he arrived the Shipibo were a little afraid that it would be like the last time. Above the tremendous hole there was a thin layer of dirt. Leaves had been places on the ground to hide the pit. When he came the earth was very thin. *Nö!* [the sound of him falling] *Ba!* [the Shipibo exclamation of surprise]

The killed him with arrows. After killing him they dragged his body out of the hole, blood spurting from his wounds. All the birds, including the red macaw, the *pish-pish*, and the *shävan pish-pish*, came to bathe in his blood. Thus they obtained their brilliant colors. One bird, the *cainqui*, came by only later because he when went fishing it always took him along time to get back. When he arrived on the scene the blood was already dry. That is why his color is only a dusky orange.

The birds then placed themselves in a file. The daughter of the *Ŝhäno Inca* then asked them all, "Who has the liver of my father?" They answered that none of them had it. The *jori* was the last bird in the file. The liver was still in its mouth. The daughter of the Bad Inca was going down the line, asking every one of them. Only the *jori* was left

when she asked it, "Do you have my father's liver?" The *jori* said, "I don't have it." But as its mouth was full at the moment, the liver was broken-*toísh!*- and the *jori* spit out the bile it contained. Streaks of the bile were left around its beak. That is why the *jori* has two greenish streaks descending from either side of its beak.[16] Then the *shänë* bird bathed in the bile, and for that reason it is green.

After killing the *Ŝhäno Inca* the people had manioc and plantains. They obtained the food plants. Before killing *Yoashico* our ancestors ate raw fish and were therefore wasted and thin. But after killing him they ate cooked fish and were healthy.

Myth 11. The Giant Eagle

IBARISTA: Long ago our ancestors went to look for salt. The journey took a long time, almost a month, before they returned [the journey involved descending the Ucayali until they reached the mouth of the Huallaga in the north, ascending the Huallaga for two days, and then they return trip. Our ancestors used to go there looking for salt. There they passed a huge eagle that perched outside of a cave within the tall mountains [which flank the Huallaga].

When they arrived the person who was seated behind the first person in the prow of the canoe was the one the eagle would always get. It was a huge eagle. Afterward the people would cry. The young man [who was the sacrifice] had been painted with *nanë* all over his body, even to the toes of his feet. The huge eagle came to get him.

He had been painted the day before. That day there were in voyage. The party arrived at the river to look for salt. Continuing the voyage they finally arrived at the tall peaks. The huge eagle, whose thighs were as large as a person's and whose talons were immense and long, came gliding silently and found the Shipibo. From the mountains-*chá, chá, chá, chá*-calling so, it came to carry its victim away.

Our people cried out in fear. The huge eagle came and carried off the one with the designs, the one with his whole body painted, the second person in the canoe.[17] The rest were left crying in the canoe. They saw the giant eagle was carrying him off to bring him to his cave in the mountains. How many people had had a similar fate? The eagle would eat them.

Anciently, shortly after people were made, a Cocama [a Tupi-speaking Indian and the traditional main-river adversaries of the Shipibo] spoke to our tribesmen, "How is it possible that the huge eagle could eat so many? Let us think. Let us make a false person of clay. After making him like a person, let us dress him a *tari* for the eagle to take. Let us see what will happen. In such a manner we will be able to

kill it." Thus they thought and agreed. The Cocama brought a *cushma* and placed it on the doll and also placed the handkerchief over his head [in photos of the 1980s Shipibo men frequently wore a handkerchief over their heads to protect them from the sun and sometimes do today].

This was done so that the eagle would come: The people shouted and hit their paddles on the sides of the canoe. They made such a tumult and cried out in high voices [when Shipibo want to communicate over great distances in the forest or over water they raise the pitch of their voices to a falsetto mode]. Before they had been quiet, but now, after making the doll, they cried out. They said to themselves, "Let us see if it comes."

The eagle heard the commotion and, turning its head from side to side, looked for its source. The eagle came - *chá, chá, chá, chá*-with outstretched wings. When it arrived the mud person was seated in the canoe. *Toĵ!* [the sound of the eagle's talons striking the mud]. It lifted the doll up, I don't know how high. But the clay Indian weighed so much that, instead of ascending ever higher, the eagle flew lower and lower; it was falling out of the sky.

The talons of the eagle were the size of the *mani* vine [which bears beautiful, brilliant red and yellow, curiously solid flowers that are recurved in a way that suggests eagles talons]. They were as large as half-grown *mani* sprouts. Thus it was. With its talons the eagle would carry people away. The clay had been well prepared. The eagle's talons sunk into the doll. The clay was soft and sticky. The eagle struggled to loosen its hold on the doll but could not let go. It gave its last life struggle. The mud weighed too much. It wanted to let go but could not.

The people cried out in exultation, "It is already falling"; thus they cried-our fellow tribesmen-out of happiness. The eagle came down-*tóncon!* [the sound of the splash as it hit the water]. The eagle sank below the waves. It stayed in the water and the people looked and looked for it. The water roiled. They remained scanning the water with their eyes. The eagle's plumes, like *mani* petals, floated to the surface as huge piranha fish ate its body. Thanks to the Cocama, after that nevermore would our tribesmen live in danger. All was well and they lived in tranquility. Then they could go and get salt and no harm would befall them. Too many of our people the huge eagle had eaten.

The Sociologic Schema

Social Structure in Myth

The strongest social reflection in the myths is the exceptional role played by women. This, as many authors have pointed out (Farabee 1922:101; Karsten 1964:185-186), is a characteristic of

the Shipibo and thus is not to be attributed to the fact that one of my most productive informants, Ibarista, was a woman.[19] As I have mentioned, the very prominent role females play in Shipibo society is based on both their prosperity derived from the tourist trade and on the matrilineal-matrilocal basis of their social organization.

Women play many of the key roles in these myths that in other lowland societies would be played by men. For example, in myth 4, which normally sees a jealous husband killing the Dragon, the Shipibo version has the old mother of the seduced girl doing him in by pouring boiling water down his hole. Myth 5 is more normal in this regard in that two males, one the potential husband of the seduced woman, kill the dragon. Myth 4 is particularly clear in showing the matriarch ordering her son to go and fetch her daughter, his sister, back into human society from her marriage to the jaguar. The fact that the young male dutifully reports to her and that she makes all the decisions is a clear reflection of actual Shipibo social life. Myth 6 shows the working of a matriarch's power within the context of a four-generation, matrilineally extended family and the treatment of the seduced woman: her reincorporation into the compound and the solidarity among woman (even among affines), seen in the sympathy her sisters-in-law display and the aid they give her. In contrast, the matriarch's greatgrandson is berated for too severely punishing a woman who, because the Shipibo practice the levirate, would very probably become his bride.

Also, as is characteristic of myth, theses Shipibo myths depict an archaic cultural landscape. The Shipibo of San Francisco are now fairly well acculturated and live in single nuclear-family dwellings, although these are still grouped into the traditional compounds. The males at least wear Western clothing and use modern weapons like the shotgun for hunting forest game, although they still fish with the traditional bow and arrow instead of hook and line or even, for the most part, instead of thrownets. In contrast, the Shipibo of the myths are shown with the men wearing *taris*, using blowguns, and living in the ancestral communal extended-family hut, the Shipibo version of the *maloca*.

Ethnicity and Political Relations

The Peruvian montaña today is an area of high cultural diversity with many groups living near each other and, to an extent,

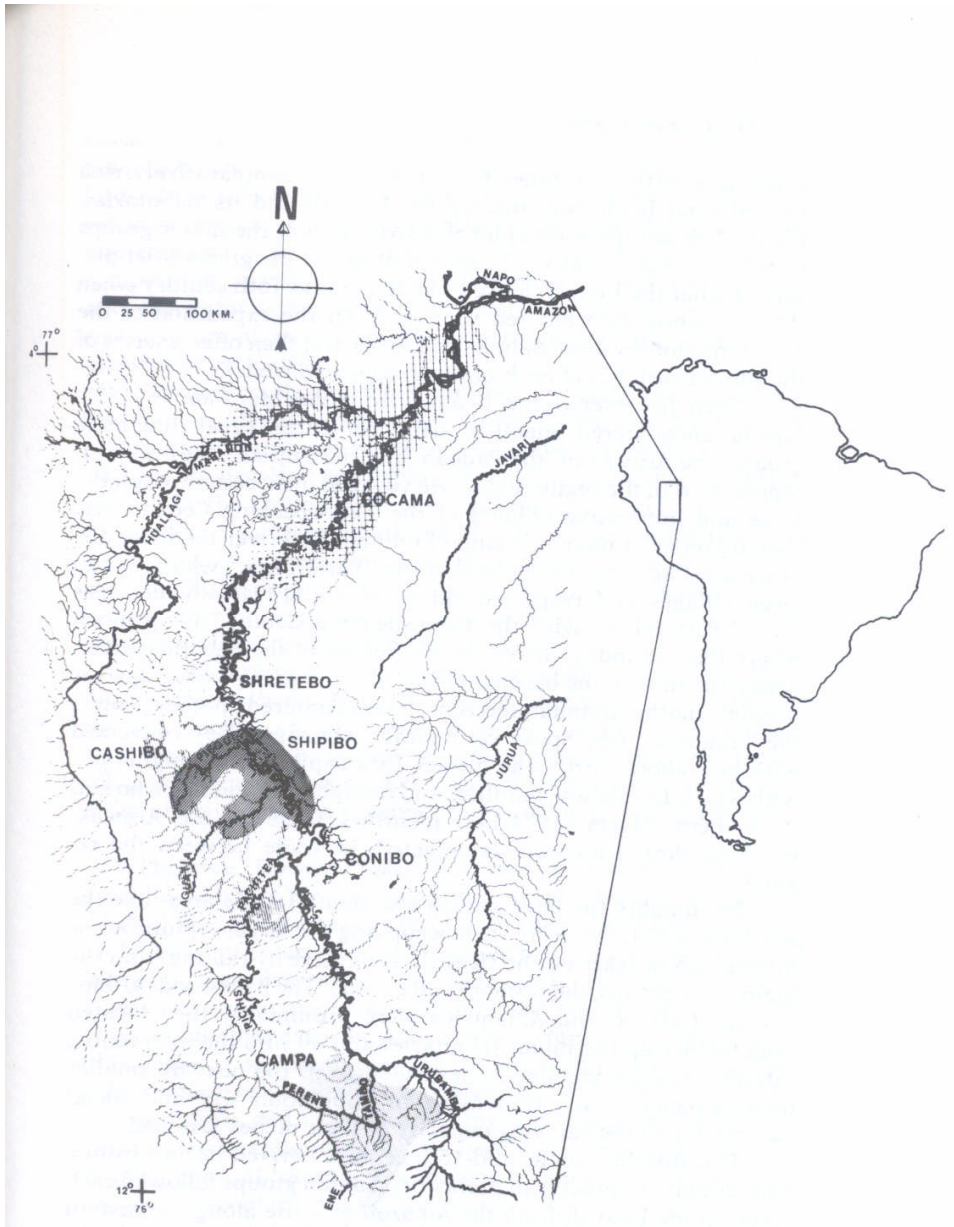


Figure 2. Map of the Peruvian Montaña Showing the Location of the Principal Groups (Some East-bank Groups Omitted)

competing with each other for the access to the comparatively rich new alluvial lands surrounding the Ucayali and its tributaries. Figure 2 shows the geographical distribution of the major groups in Shipibo oral narrative. To set the stage let me five a brief picture of what the Ucayali looked like in the mid-16th century when the first white men entered the region on the expedition of the Jesuit missionary Jean Salinas de Loyola and then offer a series of thumbnail sketches of each of the groups involved.

When he entered the Ucayali from the Marañon in 1557, Loyola encountered member tribes of three great linguistic groups: the Arawakan, the Panoan, and the Tupan. They are still represented in the region today. He voyaged upstream through the large and impressive villages of the Tupi-speaking Cocama. He then traversed a no-man's-land of uninhabited river for some distance until he came to the land of the "Pariarches," who also had large villages and respected chiefs. Myers (1974:140) identifies these "Pariarches" with the Pano-speaking Conibo, living much where they do today, above the confluence of the Pachitea River, where the mountains become visible. Then, again passing upriver through another uninhabited zone, he encountered another people, the "Ycatara," who spoke yet another language. They conversed with him about Cuzco, the former Inca capital in the highlands, with which Loyola was familiar, and brought him Indians who had been there. Myers (1974:143) identifies these as the Arawak-speaking Piro, who were later active in the trade between the regions.

Presumably the later groups also found in this area, like the Setebo and Shipibo, were then occupying the larger tributaries or the hidden oxbow lakes off the Ucayali, kept there by raising from the main-river groups, the Cocama and Conibo. The backwoods groups like the Cashibo and Amahuaca were presumably then located even farther up the minor tributaries and off into the intervening interfluves, each population separated from the next by smaller no-man's-zones, each decreasing population in size and social complexity as the carrying capacity of their niches lessened.

This distribution at mid-16th century derived in turn from a long-drawn-out process in prehistory. Indian groups followed each other up the Ucayali from the Amazon to settle along the eastern flank of the Andes and, as the newer arrivals jostled the old, broke into the many-faceted distribution of ecological adaptations presently found there. The increasing impact of civilized peoples, beginning in the 16th century, is a new element in this aboriginal

mosaic. Tribals occupy both riverine and nonriverine niched in the area. In Barth's (1969:19-20) typology of ethnic-ecological interrelationships, they fall into two categories: (a) those who monopolize separate territories within the preferred riverine niche and therefore compete with each other and (b) those who, as a result of competition, occupy separated riverine and backwoods niches and, except for symmetrical trade relationships and the asymmetrical capture of women by the riverine groups, are largely independent of each other.

The oral traditions of the Shipibo, a riverine group, albeit in the comparatively recent past, stress differences between the Cashibo are despised and exploited, whereas those that are farther away like the Campa, have more favorable characteristics. Mestizos, who now compete with the Shipibo for the mainstream, are deprecated; but their ancestors, the Cocama Indians, who competed with the Shipibo in the past for the same niche, are culture heros. Shipibo myth pictures the more remote but even more powerful Inca as godlike figures.

A brief history of the groups is the region will show how the Shipibo define themselves vis-á-vis the other groups, both aboriginal and modern, and also show the historical correlates of ethnicity. I discuss only the groups with the greatest impact on the Shipibo. With the exception of the Inca the groups are discussed in order of their presumed arrival in the region (Lathrap 1970).

The Inca. However early the Inca empire may have begun to consolidate out of the warring principalities of the southern highlands of Peru (Lumbreras 1974:215), by the region of Pachacuti Inca (1438-1471) it entered reconstructable history (Métraux 1969:42). When it was overthrown in 1532 and the years following, *Tawantiñ-soyo*, or the empire of the Four Corners, embraced the coast and highlands of the Andean chain from the southern basins of Ecuador to the Río Maule in Chile. It was an impressive political achievement, centralized to a degree, and capable of marshaling vast resources and manpower. Being a highland polity, the Inca empire never really extended its hegemony very far into the forbidding tropical forest below the *ceja* ("cloud forest") zone of the eastern flanks of the Andes. The occasional military adventures of the Inca rulers into the lowlands (Rowe 1944:207) achieved no lasting success.[20]

Nevertheless the empire's influence penetrated further then

its power, for the jungle Indians were aware of its existence all the way down to the central Ucayali. This was probably due to rivers accessible to the east, like the Apurímac, that debouch out of steep highland valleys and flow without major impediment into the Ucayali (Raymond 1972:139), thus providing a major avenue of cultural exchange. The Apurímac, which has yielded a Late Prehistoric assemblage of obvious Ucayali affinities (Raymond, DeBoer, ad Roe 1975:139) also has a very old pattern or residence whereby highland Quechua, formerly subject to the Inca empire, live above, but in close proximity to, pioneer settlements of the lowland Campa (Raymond 1972:37). The nearly continuous string of trade relationships between these groups and their compatriots down the Urubamba and Ene and, in turn, between those lower groups and Ucayali tribes, would have made the Inca a real if somewhat mythologized entity for the montaña Indians well before the modern era.

The Campa. The Campa are a numerous Arawak-speaking group with a reputation for bellicosity (Varese 1968). Actually they form at least two separate tribal societies: the River Campa of the Apurímac, Ene, Perene, and Tambo river systems, who do some of fishing and are familiar with the water, and the Pajonal Campa, who are centered immediately to the north in the great triangle between the Pachitea and the Ucayali (Weiss 1975:230, 237). "The earliest mention of the Campas is in Sarmiento de Gamboa's chronicle of 1572… Sporadic contacts and attempts by Jesuit missionaries to enter Campa territory occurred during the remainder of the 16th century and the beginning of the 17th," (1975:235-236f.). The first significant contact with the Campas, however was made but the Franciscans in 1635. The missionaries were driven out in the early decades of the following century (Elick 1969:10-11). Missionary penetration resumed in the mid-1800s and reached the fables Cerro de la Sal in the Pajonal by 1876 (Bodley 1971:10). By the turn of the century the Campa, along with the Shipibo-Conibo further south, were subjected to the *patrón* system brought about by the rubber boom (Bodley 1975:32). Their marked recalcitrance with outside exploiters continues to this day, however, so that some groups were being napalmed by the Peruvian Air Force in the mid-1960s (1975:46) and a few Campa bands survive in the interior of the Gran Pajonal in only a modern state of acculturation.

Their prehistory is not well known. The Arawakan intrusion into the Peruvian montaña probably predates the Panoan migrations by millenia. Tha Campa, who are the largest block of Arawakan-speakers in the area, may have differentiated from the Amuesha by about A.D.1200 (Lathrap 1970:135).

The Campa have not been entirely isolated in their history, thanks to their intermediary position between the lowland tribes of the Ucayali and the highland Quechua, whose lower *ceja* settlements the Campa visited as part of the flourishing Urubamba salt trade (DeBoer 1975). On the upper Ucayali, Conibo-Campa interactions have occurred for many years, some of them friendly. BeBoer even mentions the possibility of a brief alliance. The Conibo journeyed up the Ucayali to exchange their painted pottery for Campa salt. I was in a mixed Conibo-Campa Adventist missionary village on the Shahuaya, a minor tributary of the upper Ucayali, in 1969; there I witnessed Campa exchanging their strong *kantiri* burden baskets for Conibo potter. In turn the Conibo trade the *kantiris* with the Shipibo.

Like the backwoods Panoans, the Campa have small communities, and they hunt and fish to supplement the yield of their horticultural plots (Devevan 1974). Unlike the backwoods Panoans, the Campa sometimes united under the leadership of certain "strong men" to repel invaders (Weiss 1975:239). Accordingly the Shipibo-Conibo attitude toward the Campa mixes condescension for their backward, unsophisticated ways with respect for their hunting, war making, and back-country survival skills.[21] Because they occupy different ecological niches relatively isolated from each other, trade is preponderant over raiding in the relationships between the groups.

The Shipibo-Conibo. I see a pattern of Panoan migration into the montaña; the migration expands from the Amazon in the north against the resident Arawakan groups, like the Campa, driving them into the southern headwaters of the Ucayali. This may have happened by A.D. 400(Lathrap 1970:131). Then, around A.D. 800, similar but apparently better organized Panoans, who could have been the ancestors of the present-day riverine groups like the Conibo, arrived again from the north and displaced the earlier arrivals (who were perhaps the predecessors of the modern backwoods groups like the Cashibo and Amahuaca) up the surrounding tributaries.

This led up to the distribution found at the mid-16th century. The peripheral locations to which groups like the Setebo (*Ŝhretebo*) were driven by the Cocama and Conibo raiding, hinted at in the 16th century, were fixed by mid-17th century (Myers 1974:145). From this protected position the Setebo were able to reoccupy the mainstream after the Cocama warriors were decimated by European diseases. The Shipibo, in contrast, only occupies their present position with the decline of the Setebo in the 19th century. This would account for the negative description of the Shipibo by Galt in 1870 (1870-1872:183, 185) and for the similarities in appearance between them and the backwoods groups like the Campa in Safford's 1893 photographs. Although their art may have appeared in its face-painting mode by then, it clearly had not yet given the riverine Panoans their distinctive aspect by being found on their clothing.

Intermittent missionary activity continued throughout the late 17th century and into the late 18th century as the missionaries alternately provieded steel tools to the riverine Panoans and were martyred when the supplies exceeded demand. In the 19th century and increasingly today North American Protestant sects like the Adventists and Evangelicals have been active. The Peruvian government is clearly trying to use these agents to coopt the Indiands by having the missionaries extend literacy and health services to the area still under only nominal Peruvian control and beyond Peruvian national resources to incorporate.

Today, in spite of the current acculturative pressures of the missionaries and the literacy programs, the prior pressures of the rubber boom and the *patrón* system, Shipibo is still the language of the daily life. Most men know some Spanish, however, while women use only a few words as a trade language. Tribal endogamy is still rigidly adhered to. A complex art style provides a visible marker of ethnic identity, and a compled oral tradition flourishes among the older or less acculturated members of the society. Despite some technological accommodations with the expanding Peruvian fronteir, such as the occasional appearance of a *peque-peque* ("a big wooden dugout canoe with raised gunwales that is powered by a pivot-mounted Briggs and Stratton 6-9 hp. engine"), shotguns, steel machetes, and a rare wristwatch and despite some deculturaltion represented by the loss of the major ceremonies, the Shipbo remain Indian in many ways important to them and to other members of the regional society.

The Cashibo. The Cashibo are a backwoods Panoan tribe of some 1,000 members who inhabit the upper Aguaytía, its affluents, and the Sungaruyacu and its affluents, on the western shore of the Ucayali above Pucallpa (Wistrand-Robinson 1977:117). Their prehistory and history is little known, although it Lathrap's population movement is correct, they represent the "losers" in competition with the main-river groups like the Shipibo. Indeed, the name "Cashibo" actually is a Shipibo word meaning "Vampire Bat People," a pejorative designation referring to their cannibalistic tendencies and their lowly position in the regional pecking order. The Cashibo themselves simply refer to each other as *uni* ("people"-a close cognate to the Shipibo *joni* = people). Therefore the Cashibo occupy their present interfluvial range because they have been pushed there and not because they prefer it. Lathrap (1970:187-188) cites linguistic evidence for their divergence from the riverine Panoans at no more then 1,000 years ago. He has isolated a simple style of incised pottery from the Aguaytía that probably pertains to the protohistoric Cashibo.

By the late 19th and early 10th centuries the Shipibo, armed with shotguns obtained in trade from their mestizo *patrónes*, raided the Cashibo for wives and slaves. The oral accounts I discuss pertain to those predatory times. Marcoy (1875, 2:162-163) observed the Shipibo contempt for these people and recounts the crucifixion of a Cashibo captive by way of illustration. Raiding did not, however, preclude active trade. The Shipibo still remember journeying up the Pisqui, the next major western tributary above the Aguaytía, to trade their pottery with the Cashibo for salt (DeBoer 1975).

Traditionally the Cashibo lived away from the tributaries (to avoid Shipibo raids) as nomadic hunters and gatherers in small, often single-family units. Those who were more sedentary practiced some agriculture, but they moved their huts and gardens frequently and Lathrap notes that "their agricultural practices were rudimentary and slipshod compared to those of the Shipibo-Conibo" (1970:186). That they procured most of their protein by hunting animals in the depths of the forest, went about nearly naked (Safford 1893), and developed a reputation for cannibalism, which Galt mentions as early as 1870 (1870-1872:196) all fit well with the Shipibo conceptions of a backwoods tribe. While mainstream groups like the Conibo practiced ritual

endocannibalism to reincorporate deceased members of their society symbolically, the Cashibo apparently engaged in culinary, or gastronomic, cannibalism-the eating of human flesh for its protein (Dole 1962:570). Some Cashibo bands were still hostile in 1962 when an SIL member visited them to make a material cultural collection. Indeed there probably still are isolated bands of Cashibo out in the jungle, for the Shipibo report seeing lone columns of smoke rising from the interior of their former range. The rest of the Cashibo have now merged with the rural Peruvian population (Wistrand-Robinson 1977:117).

The Amahuaca. The Amahuaca are another small backwoods Panoan tribe and are scattered in tiny autonomous settlements along the eastern order between Peru and Brazil. They originally inhabited the eastern bank of the Ucayali, centered along the Chesea and Tahuania rivers. They too depend on hunting and slash-and-burn horticulture (Dole 1962:568) and possess a very simple material culture. They were very badly battered by both rubber gatherers and Conibo in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Because of the consequent social disruption there is only a hint today that they may have had some form of dual organization. They now live in a patrilocal, extended, often polygynous households (Dole 1979:28-29).

The Cocama. The Cocama were a powerful Tupi-speaking tribal confederacy closely related to the Omagua of the Amazon. They lived in large towns along the banks of the Huallaga and lower Ucayali. When they were first contacted in 1644 the Cocama had chiefs and could field thousands of warriors. By 1657 their power was ended by Western diseases (Myers 1974:147). Remnants of the tribe were resettled in missionary villages with other regional Indian groups, and they rapidly acculturated to form the backbone of the present rural mestizo population. By 1950 some Cocama women still wore their traditional skirt, and by 1970 a few still persisted in making their native painted pottery, but with European-derived floral designs (Lathrap 1970:185-186). Today there is little evidence of Cocama culture. Most of the descendants of the Cocama now aggressively identify themselves as Peruvians, *civilados*, and not as *Indios*.

Prehistory shows that the Cocama traveled into the Ucayali as the last major wave of migration from the north and the

mainstream of the Amazon before the coming of the white men, and by the same route. Lathrap (1970:145) has identified the Camito complex of Imariacocha, a lake formed on the Tamaya River, a tributary of the central Ucayali, with the protohistoric Cocama of the 14th century A.D. They apparently successfully competed with the prior arrivals, the ancestors of the Shipibo-Conibo, because of their superior organizational, if not technological, abilities (Weber 1975:441-444).

This forced the more fragmented Panoans to retreat upriver and along the lateral tributaries of the Ucayali onto less desirable land, where they underwent a period of forced cultural "devolution" until the Pandora's box of European diseases decimated the more accessible Cocama. This allowed the more isolated, and therefore protected, Panoans to recapture large sections of the main channel while maintaining an Indian identity. This process took place gradually during the 17th to the 19th centuries as the Cocama acculturated.

Ironically, in renewed competition between the two historical antagonists, the now-Europeanized ex-Cocama, as rural mestizos, are aggrandizing their land holdings in the name of expanding civilization against the still visibly Indian Shipibo-Conibo (Lathrap 1970:17-19). The systematic pilfering and vituperation the mestizos heap on the Indians is one convenient way to force them to give up their prime agricultural land and productive fishing ares. In San Francisco de Yarinococha, the biggest Shipibo village near Pucallpa, the expensive Briggs and Stratton engines the Shipibo mount on the rear of their *peque-peques* are regularly stolen by the surrounding mestizos, who take advantage of the casual attitude the Shipibo have traditionally had for material things. Smaller personal items are even harder to protect in houses that have no walls. Another area of conflict is the ex-Cocama interest in cattle, which is greater than the Shipibo display. The free-ranging mestizo cattle form a major source of Shipibo-Conibo displacement, for they thrive on the Indians' unfenced gardens (Weber 1975:24).

Outside of occasionally powering around a mestizo commercial fisherman in close circles to scare him with capsizing, there is little the Indians can do to discourage the overexploitation of their fishing grounds. The mestizos regard the Shipibo as dirty, drunken *salvajes* ("savages"), while the Shipibo look down on the mestizos as inferior creatures, scheming, competitive and dishonest.

The Meshing of Myth and Ethnopolitical Relations

In Shipibo eyes the Campa and Cashibo make a good contrast because they are both backwoods groups, inhabitants of the same forest the Shipibo fear; yet one is close at hand while the other is far away and only accessible through intervening groups. Although both are warlike it is the Campa's bellicose reputation that has spread far and wide. The Shipibo compound their respect for the Campa with a distance factor. It has been pointed out that a given tribe will view remote peoples in a mythological light, exaggerating their martial or shamanistic powers (Whitten 1976:198, 1977:165). Tribals closer to home are enveloped in less mystery and are more likely to be exploited. Such was the unhappy fate of the Cashibo, while the remote Campa enjoyed the status of impressive and forbidding aliens.

Myth 9, the Yanapuma myth, portrays the Campa as wise forest Indians who hold impressive shamanistic powers but only use them for the benign purposes and who are formidable warriors but only respond in self-defense. Thus a Campa *meraya* disinterestedly warns a group of mestizo *caucheros* ("rubber gatherers"; also lumber workers) of their imminent death at the "paws" of the Black Jaguar-a malignant supernatural and a manifestation of negative forces like cannibalism and night-only to have his warning ignored. While the mestizos are killed, the Campa expertly escapes by using flight medicine. Later he assists in the destruction of the ogre in its cave in the mountains.

If the Campa are "noble savages" in such myths, the Cashibo are just plain "savages" or, at worst, subhuman beasts. In Shipibo mythology they function as minor variants of the Forest Ogre, a common jungle spirit who is deadly, but stupid, condensed symbol of unbridled, asocial, libidinous energy. Here the Cashibo reputation for incest and cannibalism becomes relevant. It is a commonplace in South Amerindian mythology that eating and sex are metaphorically linked (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1971:216). Hence Forest Ogres (and Cashibo as minor Forest Ogres), as symbols of the excessive sexual energy, are characterized by extreme acultural ingestion-cannibalism-as they are associated with extreme asocial sex-incest. Because of his total absorption in the quest for sex, the Forest Ogre-Cashibo should be easily duped and-although dangerous-appear as stupid and mortal as a regular Forest Ogre does elsewhere (Wagley 1977:134).

There is a tenuous ethnographic basis for the incestuous = Cashibo equation that the Shipibo make. Braun (1975) reports that the similar and fugitive backwoods Iscobakebu, who are also Panoan-speakers, have been so reduces in demographic circumstances that to continue their society certain miniscule bands have had to suspend the incest taboo and permit brother-sister marriages. This situation was later repudiated when circumstances improved with resettlement, but it could as easily have happened to similarly situated Cashibo groups and thus provided a basis for the prejudicial Shipibo assessment.

The Shipibo indicate their opinion of the stupidity of the Cashibo as well as the valor of the Campa by relating a putatively historical incident:

MANUEL: A Campa man had traveled to the central Ucayayli and married a Shipibo woman,[22] and they lived alone in the forest. Six Cashibo warriors raided their household one day, looking for women, but the Campa had presence of mind to challenge them to an arrow duel.[23] One by one the Cashibo shot their [famous and highly decorated and barbed war] arrows at the Campa, who artfully dodged them all. Then, their arrows exhausted, the Campa announced that it was his turn and, one after another, calmly shot the Cashibo who tried in vain to dodge his keen aim. The last two Cashibo succeeded in running away and dove into a nearby stream to escape to the other side and flee into the jungle. But the Campa picked off one as he swam in the water and shot the last one as he tried to climb up the riverbank on the opposite side. The Campa had killed them all.

The Shipibo's low estimation of the Cashibo is also expressed in their stories of raids in which they slaughtered Cashibo men and captured the young women and boys to use as wives and slaves. In these conflicts the Shipibo had the advantage because they possessed shotguns. As Lathrap points out:

There was a definite feeling of missionary zeal associated with these wars. The Shipibo regard themselves as "civilized" and the backwoods Panoan groups as "sub-standard" from the cultural point of view. The Cashibo and Amahuaca maidens captured by the Shipibo were being "saved" from a life of barbarism. (1970:182)

The following account of a raid, which probably occurred in the early 1920s, illustrated this rationalization:

Our ancestors went to fight against others. A great *curaka*[24] invited a large number of his men. They traveled by canoe for several days. Then they entered a jungle trail and began looking for signs of the enemy. Two men

went ahead as scouts. When they found the Cashibo they returned to tell the rest of the party. In the early morning, when all the Cashibo were inside [their communal hut] sleeping, the Shipibo approached and surrounded it. One of the Shipibo then dashed into the hut to frighten the Cashibo.[25] They took fright and tried to escape out the door, leaving their bows and arrows behind.[26] Thus the battle began. As the Cashibo streamed out of the hut they were picked off with shotguns and arrows. When the adults, men and women, were killed, the Shipibo took the children and placed them in *racotes*.[27]

Now, those who had escaped came back to fight for their children. Thus our ancestors fought with the Cashibo. Our fellow tribesmen thought that none of them would get close because it was too dangerous. But the Cashibo were valiant and approached the Shipibo war party. These things happened long ago.[28]

When our fellow tribesmen returned to their villages they came sounding the *tiati*.[29] Those who remained behind called out to the party as it was approached asking who had been wounded or killed. The canoe beached at the port, and again the question was asked. The party replied, "One still has an arrow in his body; the Cashibo hit him. Some of us are dead. The Cashibo took one woman." They carried her off and when she was very old she was killed by them and eaten. Some Shipibo set off to rescue her. There was another fight and the Shipibo were defeated; still they tried. They tried and tried and tried.

The Shipibo arrived at the [communal hut] of another group of Cashibo. They again surrounded it.[30] They set the hut on fire. While the hut was burning, the Cashibo fled and our fellow tribesmen captured their children. Each one of the Shipibo had a child. One person entered the burning hut. The ancients were not timid. He entered through the leafy wall and broke the Cashibo arrows in two-*Chaish*[31]-so that none remained for them to use. The Shipibo shot off their guns over the heads of the Cashibo children to frighten them. The children squatted in terror; then the Shipibo grabbed them. The children screamed. Some of our tribesmen grabbed two, some three, some only one. Those that did not get any began to fight with those who had many. Therefore, he who had two gave one to he who had none.[32]

When they got back to the village the "angry ones" prepared *masato* mixed with hot chili peppers. As soon as they drank it they vomited.[33] They then dressed the Cashibo captives.[34] They cut their hair a little above the eyebrows.[35] They shaved the beard of the Cashibo young men and cut off their long hair.[36] Thus they looked like ourselves. Even inside of one year they had learned a little of our language. One said, "I want to bring my child here, and my sister." Therefore our fellow tribesmen returned to Cashibo territory once more [there was another successful raid] . For that reason there were many Cashibo in every Shipibo village. But later they

were lost in a bad sickness [an epidemic], and for that reason until today there are none left.

In this tale the hazards of raiding the Cashibo turn out to be greater than one might have expected from the contemptible picture of their fighting prowess the Cashibo-Campa story portrayed. Nevertheless the Shipibo accounts of the linguistically and historically close related Cashibo characterize them as a form of humanity totally different from themselves.

Dole, who has done fieldwork among the equally raided Amahuaca-principally on the Sepahua and Chimichinia, an island on the upper Ucayali-shows how the other side views this situation. It is a curious picture of asymmetrical admiration and self-depreciation. The Amahuaca tacitly admit their subordinate status by being careful not to reveal their opinions of the Shipib-Conibo. When these do surface, such opinions

are ambivalent and are usually hidden in ostensibly factual statements. The Amahuaca have been so traumatized and feel so powerless that they are in general extremely careful no to make any negative gestures or statements, even under the influence of *masato*, in order to maintain peace even with their enemies. As one woman put it, "I am not afraid. Even if they kill me I won't fight-I am not afraid." C*ondiwo* and *Shipiwo* were included in the list of peoples who have formerly killed Amahuaca extensively and are now enemies of the Amahuaca for that reason. They are said to have taken Amahuaca children in these hostilities. On the other hand, one of the same informants who gave this information also said that the Conibo were "our people" and that the Amahuaca were originally with them, the Piro and the Campa. In keeping with this feeling of close ethnic relationship with the Conibo , there has been some intermarriage of the Amahuaca on Chumichinia with Conibo, and the Amahuaca of the island have adopted Conibo culture extensively in the past generation or two, as for example in clothing style, house pattern, hammocks, pot shape, settlement pattern, dugout canoes, reliance on fishing, strong *masato*, etc…. On the whole the Amahuaca see themselves as very vulnerable, victimized, but hard working, honorably, and independent. They are horrified at any show of imagined hostility, which they not infrequently have met by killing the supposed enemy before the latter could kill them (personal communication 1979).

Traveling Shipibo, on the other hand, will point out that many of the seemingly "Conibo" women of the upper Ucayali were originally Amahuaca. The latter name was mentioned in the con-

text of depreciation, as if they were talking of savages masquerading as civilized people who, no matter how expertly they make Conibo pottery _the major index of their "civilized state" beyond adopting riverine Panoan dress and language), could never really redeem themselves in the eyes of "pure" Shipibo or Conibo.

If this is one way a victimized backwoods group feels about themselves and others, another similar group, but one which has taken a hand in the victimizing-the Campa-present themselves far differently. Secure in their autonomy, the Campa hold a high opinion of themselves. Only the Inca, whom they have a historical knowledge of are placed in an admired light. Many Inca gods figure, albeit remotely or just as names, in Campa theogony. The Campa view their *Ínka* ("Inca" much as the Shipibo do, as a technological genius who is captured downriver by the whites and is responsible for the latter's technological superiority (Weiss 1975:419).

Unlike the Shipibo, who feel their loss of the Inca's genius to be their own fault (in myth 1 the Shipibo ancestor makes a wrong choice of two potential brides, in his haste letting the true Inca's daughter escape while grabbing merely his adopted one), the Campa have externalized it and projected it on their enemies. Similarly, whereas the Shipibo bring in other tribesmen to kill the bird ogre in myth 11, the Campa do it themselves.

At least the Shipibo and the Campa agree on their placement of the white men; they are cannibalistic demons, aspects of the Dragon. "The *virakócha* (caucasians) are hated and feared, virtually forming a category of demons" (Weiss 1975:247-248). Indeed in Campa mythology ogres live inside hills just as Caucasians do (1975:284) and emerge out of lakes, the doors of the hills and home of the Dragon-lakes that can "devour" the Campa by welling up into a drowning flood when they approach too closely (1975:248). In Campa eyes the Caucasians actually *caused* a world flood (1975:267), which swept life away. A particularly graphic cannibal origin myth of the Caucasians illustrated their ogre role in Campa myth:

> Long ago a Campa… was fishing in [a] lake. He first used a papaya on his hook, but without success. He then used a chicken on his hook, but without success. Finally he baited his hook with another Camp's child-and pulled up the Spaniards. The Spaniards pursued him to the house of the *Ínka*…there the Spaniards sliced up the Campa and *Ínka*. The Campa was killed, but the *Ínka* never dies. (Weiss 1975:415)

If the Caucasians are bloodthirsty ogres, the other Indian tribals fare little better, particularly the Panoans, both backwoods and riverine, to the north. "Campa ethnocentrism is thoroughgoing; the creation of humanity means the creation of the Campas. The take no interest, so far as I could discover, in the origins of neighboring tribes" (Weiss 1975:411) save for the Cashibo, whom they regard to be the cannibal descendants of a man-eating hawk and its human wife (Weiss 1975:411). The riverine Panoans also seem to be related to the cannibal moon because the moon uses to kill his victims their *huino* ("sword-club"), a weapon not used by the Campas (1975:369f).

Thus the Shipibo are not admired by the Campa even as they admire the Campa. This curiosity asymmetry is continued in the Shipibo view of their onetime competitors, the Cocama. Although the Cocama pushed the Shipibo-Setebo off the prime new alluvial lands in the past and kept them off by raiding, instead of reviling them as might be expected, the Shipibo elevate the Cocama to the role of cultural heros. In two myths in this collection the Cocama are represented as shamans even more wise and powerful than those of the Campa. They outwit ogres who have left the untutored Shipibo helpless. In the Black Jaguar myth (myth 9), for example, it is the Cocama shaman who, once informed by the Campa *meraya* of the dreadful events at the lumbering camp, leads a mixed force of Indians and mestizos down the wide, roadlike path of the *huiso inon*. As the party advances the Cocama shaman blows magical protection in the direction of the Black Jaguar, making the ogre fall asleep so the force can kill it.

In myth 11, about a giant harpy eagle that is killing Shipibo as they pass through Cocama territory on the Huallaga in their search for salt, it is again the Cocama shaman who comes to the rescue. He innovatively models a human dummy out of clay and places it in the prow of the canoe. When the eagle swoops down on the dummy its talons become hopelessly stuck and, weighted down, the ogre crashes into the water, where it meets a grisly end, consumed by piranhas. Instead of the enmity the myths should mirror from the political competition between the Shipibo and the Cocama, one finds amity and asymmetrical aid. Just as the Amahuaca admired the Shipibo, so the Shipibo admire the Cocama as transitive self-alter image perception corresponds to ecological placement and resource competition. As elsewhere, those that get, get admired.

Goldman (1963:25) shows among the Cubeo Indians of the northwest Amazon the close correspondence between the prestige and the locality along the continuum from the main river to the tributaries. Cubeo sibs located on the main river rank highest, whereas those on the tributaries rank lowest and are even reluctant to accept visitors (1963:34). Siskind (1970) also points out that backwoods groups like the Culina acknowledge the superiority of other groups, like the Sharanahua, who have succeeded in capturing more of the mainstream from them. This case also shows the asymmetrical ease with which backwoods groups, like the Saranahua, can reenter the main river in the absence of competition. As at Chumichinia with the Anahuaca, this ecological readjustment can take as little as one generation. On the other hand, because of the different kind of detailed forest knowledge required, it is much more difficult for groups to go in the opposite direction-from the river to the jungle. Indeed there is little incentive for groups to make that transition. As the myth makes plain, there is a deference for those in power and contempt for those who are weak. The relatively greater power of the Coama is no doubt made more palatable to the Shipibo by the fact that Cocama hegemony is now in the past.

If the Shipibo admire the Cocama, then they admire the more remote and much more powerful Inca even more. The Inca's normal function in Shipibo mythology is as culture hero. Despite the long distance separating them the Shipibo feel a surprising affinity for the Inca. "They say they are brothers of the Inca, and that there is a branch of their tribe called Inca," as Farabee (1922:80) notes for the Conibo. One receives the same frustrating response to many different questions about the origins of Shipibo practice: "Our Inca taught us how." This problem is not a new one, as Farabee noted from the 1920s: "Anything they see that is new, strange, or beyond understanding, then believe belongs to the Inca" (1922:96, on the Shipibo). These nonanswers to foolish questions are very much like the response many fieldworkers have gotten to similar bald questions: "Our ancestors invented it." The Shipibo believe that the Inca visited the central Ucayali where, *Viracocha*-like, he instructed the benighted Shipibo in the arts of civilization. Indeed the Shipibo have a myth wherein their ancestors tried to follow the Inca when he returned to his mountain realm, but their ascent was barred by impenetrable thickets and they had to turn back. This is

as clear a statement of environmental segregation, limiting each group to its ecologically adapted niche, as once could desire.

The Inca is good. He benevolently instructs Shipibo ancestors in even the simplest task. A charming short myth given elsewhere in this volume, on the origin of the correct method of paddling a dugout canoe, illustrates this view. Anciently, the myth asserts, the Shipibo attempted to paddle with the sharp edge of the paddle, slicing through the water rather then pushing it. Therefore they derived no force from their strokes. Thus, despite the Inca's thoughtfully having made the rivers flow in *two* directions simultaneously, downriver on one side and upriver on the other, it still took the Shipbo many weeks to get anywhere. A bird, acting on behalf of the Inca, rescued them by teaching them how to paddle with the flat of the paddle. All was now well and journeys took expert canoemen as little time as they do today. No wonder that there are periodic stirrings of a millenarian cult among the Shipibo about the return of the Inca and the Golden Age, when the presently powerful white man and mestizo will be overthrown and the Shipibo will recoup their losses.

Even in their present debased condition the highlands are regarded as a place of ritual strength among the Shipibo shamans. Interspersed among their regular Shipibo curing songs, a Shipibo shaman while under the influence of ayahuasca (*nishi*) will sing what he is convinced is a curing song in Quechua, the language of the Inca empire. Nevertheless, after carefully listening to tapes made of such songs, I am convinced that they are mostly gibberish, songs full of Quechua *sounding* words, but words that will be found in no Quechua dictionary. Nevertheless, because it is deeply felt that the power of a shaman's words can cure, this attempt of Shipibo shamans to sing in Quechua stands as a powerful testimonial to their belief in the magical efficacy of the Inca.

Yet perhaps because the Shipibo, as lowland Indians, were remotely aware that the Inca, as highlanders, regarded all lowlanders with contempt and viewed them as a source of infectious diseases (Bastien 1978:4) or perhaps more plausibly because of the profound dualism of tropical forest mythology in general and Shipibo mythology in particular, there is not one Inca, but two. There is a Good Inca, whom we have already met, and a Bad Inca, or *Ŝhäno Inca*, who plays the local role of the major ogre in jungle myths: the dragon. The Dragon is a composite dual figure

with snake, cayman, and piranha elements. It is, in its primary manifestation, an underworld, subaquatic manifestation of feminine-masculine seductiveness. The Dragon is the origin of disease, death, and putrefaction. At the same time, the Dragon is the withholder of cultural gifts from man, the jealous guardian of transforming fire. This dual role for the Inca may be an analogue of the kidnapped status of the Campa *Ínka*, who after all, was once good and helped the Campas by inventing things for them but now, as a prisoner, is made to provide the technological basis of the white man's supremacy. The Shipibo have to explain the same problem: How is it that the Inca could have ruled but then gone away and let the white man take over? The Campa make the solution to the problem a dual Inca who now does evil out of compulsion, whereas the Shipibo resort to an even more thoroughgoing Manichaeism, having the evil Inca exist alongside the good and do evil maliciously.

Like the Yąnomamö Dragon (Chagnon 1976:46), *Yoashico*, or the "Stingy One" as he is also known in Shipibo, withholds fire from man because it is the cultural transformative agent that will give him freedom. The monstrous Bad Inca must be tricked into releasing it. The ancestral Shipibo, as one myth puts it, were wasting away, cultureless, warming uncooked food in the heat of a weak sun, until a parakeet stole fire in the form of a coal from *Ŝhäno Inca's* daughter, Venus. As the Dragon, keeper of excessive waters, *Yoashico* sends a tempest to extinguish the fire and plunge man back into nature. But birds, always the friends and intermediaries of man, protest the fledgling fire with their outstretched wings. *Ŝhäno Inca* then meets his death via an "arrow match" just as did the Cashibo, his minor manifestations. Appropriately, he is buried alive and then shot full of arrows, the bright red, solar-associated birds like the macaw bathing in the blood spurting from his myriad wounds.

Just as the Cashibo structurally occupy the side of Nature, so too does the Bad Inca. Just as his actions are counterbalanced by the cultural gifts of the Good Inca, so are the savage backwoods Cashibo complemented by the benevolent Cocama riverine shamans. In the equation, mainstream: backwoods : : Culture: Nature, the symmetry of the structural model corresponds to the dyadic oppositions manifested in the ecopolitics of competing regional peoples.

If the Shipibo view their ancient competitors for the main river in a much more positive light than might have been expected, their attitudes toward their modern competitors are completely predictable, even is they are the direct descendants of the Cocama culture heros. The traditions picture the ex-Cocama mestizos as foolish, stubborn, and ignorant. They ignore the Campa *meraya's* warnings in the Black Jaguar myth and die in a magically induced sleep. Yet it is the mestizos who eventually kill the ogre with their shotguns, even is they had to be guided and protected to his lair by Cocama shaman. This reflects the Shipibo regard for the mestizos, which oscillated between contempt and distrust for their personalities and way of life and admiration of their mastery of modern technology.

Although disliked, the mestizos are familiar figures on the Ucayali. They regard themselves as *blancos*; the Shipibo so not agree with that equation. Because *blancos* ("whites") are rare, strange in appearance, and the possessors of exotic *high* technology, where as the mestizos merely have some elements of modern technology, the Shipibo regard whites with great suspicion. Significantly, in the *Yanapuma* myth the ogre is identified as a white man in a fine suit and white vest. It is he who kills the mestizos by assuming the form of an animal. Thus the white man is clearly regarded as superior in power and evil to the mestizos. Such obvious Caucasian outsides as tourists, anthropologists, and missionaries fit into this mythical category very nicely. Being hairy (many tourists and anthropologists are young men with a profusion of hair and sporting beards) and as prone to be about at night as during day, they may be responded to by the Shipibo as very real and frightful Forest Ogres. This identity sums up all the ambivalence they feel for the technologically more powerful and richer white men. This is why at the end of myth 1 the Shipibo felt compelled to explain why "we Indians have nothing." The Shipibo are not comparing themselves to the mestizos in that myth.

The Shipibo have borrowed the highland concept of the *pishtaka*, the hairy white men who roam about the selva in power launches killing Indians to render them for their oil. Indeed, a cruise boat operated by La Cabaña, a local tourist park, has had a few arrows shot at it in forays up the Ucayali because the Conibo regard it as a boatload of predatory *pishtaka*. This is a vivid con-

cept for the Shipibo. One day in 1976 I was greeted by a breathless informant telling me that two bearded *pishtaka* just that morning had "zapped" a local Shipibo woman as she approached the water to bathe and wash clothes. The weapon they used was described to me like a hand-held laser (although my informant was ignorant of such things).

The *pishtaka* is widely believed in by Arawak groups like the Campa (Wiess 1975:292) and has recently become quite pervasive as a belief among the mestizos of the Department of Loreto, the Peruvian jungle province the Shipibo-Conibo occupy (1975:305f.). As such, the *pishtaka* is clearly derived from the highland *pishtaco*, a figure that has very real roots in history. Oliver-Smith (1969:363) notes that the conquering Spanish of the 16th and 17th centuries killed Indians for their body fat (*unto*) to use as a treatment for their wounds and sores, according to the chronicler Antonio Herrera. This gruesome bit of folk medicine may have been a rational response of the Castilians to the virulence of syphilis infection and its resultant pustules. As it was widely believed at the time, and still is debated, that syphilis was an Amerindian disease, it may have been felt that parts of their bodies would carry some immune bodies that would fight against it. In any event the practice died out, but is regularly used as a control device to keep them in their place by *cholos* (highland equivalent of mestizos) and others higher in the Andean power hierarchy than the Indians (Oliver-Smith 1969:367-368).

The highland *pishtaco* is a nocturnal murdrer who carries a long knife, which he uses to behead, dismember, and cut fat from his Indian victims (Oliver-Smith 1969:363). He is also described as a raper of Indian women. This description so far corresponds well with the tropical forest Indian definition of a Forest Ogre. Yet whereas highland Indians view *pishtaco* as large, evil-looking white or mestizo males dressed in high boots, leather jacket, and a felt hat, emphasizing the exotic and sumptuous nature of his costume, the Shipibo stress his long hair and beard, the libidinous hairiness (Leach 1958; Rivière 1969a) of the *pishtaka*, in consonance with preexistent jungle ideas about all ogres. These entities are real for the Shipibo, and all the powers ascribed to malevolent aquatic or forest spirits in their traditional mythology are assigned to them. The model would not have it otherwise.

Ceremony as Condensed Symbol: The *Ani Ŝhrëati* or the *Bëstëti Ŝhrëati*

Some of the themes derived from Shipibo myths may be applied to the study of a famous Shipibo puberty rite, the *ani Ŝhrëati*. This rite has been of considerable interest to travelers and anthropologists alike for its unique elaboration and for its shocking (to Westerners) main episode: the radical clitoridectomy young Shipibo girls must undergo before they are marriageable. This rite-along with the closely similar hair-cutting rite, *Bëstëti Ŝhrëati* ("scissors cutting"), which is sometimes confused with it-is or was a central Shipibo institution. The complete disfavor with which this "barbaric" custom is viewed by neighboring mestizos, governmental officials, and missionaries alike has caused it to pass out of currency on the main river, although it may still occur in abbreviated form on the upper tributaries like the Pisqui.

Its disappearance means that much of my information on *ani Ŝhrëati* is derived not from direct observation but from transcribed taped interviews, in Shipibo, with numerous informants, both men who had witnessed it as boys and elderly women who took part in it. My accounts, though detailed and the product of much cross-examination, are contradictory-especially about the timing and sequence of events. Nevertheless it has been possible to recover a clear pattern of activities, spanning three days, that supplements the previous accounts of this rite by Farabee (1922:85), Girard (1958:244), Karsten (1964:186-191), and Tessman (1928:205-208), to name the major authors. Although these authorities sometimes differ over the meaning of the ceremony (chiefly Farabee versus the others), they do agree on the order of its stages and thus have been a help to me in the diachronic arrangement of my data. I use both Karsten's and Tessman's accounts the most because they are the fullest. Whereas all these authors have stressed the operation on the girls and the fighting among the men that usually accompanied the operation, they have largely ignored an episode that looms equally important in my native accounts, which I call "the killing of the pets." As my data I use the long paraphrases of two men who saw the rite as children, Manuel and Juan (the father of my assistant Josè, who was also a principal informant), and footnote these with both anthropologists' accounts and the detailed comments of some mature and elderly

women who have undergone the rite and presided over many others. These women are: Segundina, Manuel's mother and the source of much of my information until her death at a very advanced age some years ago; Otelia, the aged wife of Manuel's brother Josè; Inesia, another woman of many years and now probably deceased; Teolinda, Juan's wife; and Ibarista, Manuel's wife. These last two women are the youngest-in their 40s. Most other women in their 30s, and some in their late 20s, have also undergone the rite; the younger women are all presently unmutilated.

Although female puberty or initiation rites are found among some other Panoan tribes, like the Cashinahua (Kensinger 1975:61), and although others, like the Cashibo, have fertility rites-fiestas that share some elements of the Shipibo *ani Ŝhrëati*, such as the killing of the pets (Wistrand-Robinson 1977:138), as a total configuration centering on the clitoridectomy the *ani Ŝhrëati* is unique. Thus it is important not just because it is a piece of ethnographic exotica but because material culture elements from it could serve as index fossils of the Panoan way of life in the archaeological record. As fate would have it, the key imperishable artifact that is associated with the rite, the *ŝhërvënanti,* a clay lozenge that serves to cover the vagina after the operation, has been found in secure stratigraphic context in a Cumacaya midden dating to about A.D. 800 (Roe 1973:172-173).[38] This find coheres with the other detailed similarities between the archaeological complex of the Cumacaya and modern riverine Panoan material culture, thus showing a millennium of riverine Panoan occupation of the main river. It also occurred at the legendary site of the ancestral village of the Shipibo-Conibo (see the *Niwëru* World Tree myth below), thus to an extent validating a historical kernel of truth in at least one Shipibo mythological account.

In this examination of the *ani Ŝhrëati,* I use *rite* as the general term for any cosmologic *action*. I contrast this with both myths and folktales, which are cosmologic *accounts*. The key distinction here is between what is done and what is said. As subcategories beneath *rite* I distinguish *ceremony* from *ritual*, *ceremony* being a set of cosmologic actions directed primarily to other human beings, who form the major intended audience, rather than to supernaturals (who may also be involved, but only peripherally). *Ritual* then becomes a set of cosmologic actions primarily addressed to supernatural, although other humans may be incidentally involved.[39] All such distinctions are of course somewhat artificial;

yet I think this one useful because Weiss (1975:513) has shown that cosmologic beliefs and mythical accounts of those beliefs may exist in the virtual absence of any systematic set of related actions (in the Campa case, rituals).

Perhaps the Campa situation is similar to that of the Shipibo, many of whose elaborate rites have passed away and who yet retain a flourishing set of accounts. Thus both groups' condition may be a product of deculturation or culture loss based on a difficult contact situation. After all, it is harder to get a group of people who know similar sets of culturally stereotyped acts together so that they can perform them as a unit than it is to have single individuals remember and relate fragmentary accounts that might have lain behind those group actions. This may explain the greater longevity of myths than rituals or ceremonies in many Amerindian communities.[40]

Using these definitions the *ani Ŝhrëati,* although it may once have had some ritual connotations, was for much of the time that we have record of, primarily a public ceremony, part of the enduring "fiesta" pattern of many tropical forest societies. While agreeing with Goldman that "there is, of course, no single points from which to explain all of a ceremony" (1964: 115-116), I focus my attempts to interpret the *ani Ŝhrëati* on two related aspects of a single problem: the distinctions among nature, mediated between states, and culture. These two aspects are: the discrimination between "wild" and "tame" categories, and the agnostic yet complementary relationship between the sexes in Shipibo society.

Sequence of Events

Tessman serves as a useful introduction to these rites:

> While the boys grow up without having to undergo any sort of initiation rituals or having their freedom restricted in any fashion for long or short periods of time, the girls must, when they are old enough, endure an awful encroachment on their bodies. This is the female circumcision rite [*die Beschneidung*, lit. "the cutting"], which is accompanied by feasting, celebration, and ceremony. (1928:205, trans. mine)

It goes by many names. Tessman called it *ani veate*, literally the "big drinking" (1928:205); Karsten named it the *wake honèti* (1964:186); and my informants used *ani Ŝhrëati,* "big drinking." Tessman recorded its distribution to include all the riverine Panoan groups:

And despite the annexation of their land by civilization, they still continue this practice. This holds true for all the Tschama [Chama-a pejorative term liking all the riverine Panoans; not currently used], the Kunibo [Conibo] of the upper Ucayali River, the Ssipibo [Shipibo] of the Aguaytía and Pisqui. The Ssipibo [Shpibo] of the middle Ucayali, and the Ssetebo [Setebo] also still practice the ceremony. (1928:206, trans. mine)

The number of girls who underwent the ceremony seems to have been somewhat variable. My informants mentioned two or three girls going through at the same time, whereas Tessman (1928:206) states that there were three, four and sometimes six girls of the ages of eight to twelve being initiated together. Karsten's comments here are the most complete:

Formerly this feast seems to have been arranged for every young girl separately as soon as she was considered marriageable, especially if she was betrothed, but nowadays these initiations ceremonies are performed wit several marriageable girls at once, some 3, 6, 8, or more taking part in them, and the feasts are only arranged at certain periods of the year when there are several girls ready for the feast. (1964:186)

Karsten (1964:186) also mentions a hut of seclusion, which was really a menstrual hut, but my informants seemed to believe that the girls were simply secluded in their opaque mosquito netting-if not in their own house then in one of the huts that might be temporarily unoccupied in the same compound. Karsten's remarks:

They begin when the girl has had her first menstruation, at an age of 10 to 12 years. The girl is then kept secluded in a small hut especially constructed for her outside the house, where she is attended to by her mother or by some other elderly woman. This hut is called a *pushuva*, a "house of silence," and while staying there she has to observe not only silence but also a strict diet. She is forbidden to eat meat, especially that of swine, and big fish like the *gamitana* and *paichi*, but she is allowed to eat small fish of the kind most frequently caught in the river or in Lake Yarina. She is also forbidden to eat Indian pepper, salt and sweet things, but is allowed to drink masato. (1964:186)

Given this background, here is Manuel's account of the *ani Ŝhrëati* and the *Bëstëti Ŝhrëati,* which I transcribed from a tape. He had seen both as a boy, and as he spoke his wife, Ibarista, added her comments where he seemed to falter in his recollection.

Our ancestors had the ceremony to cut the clitoris of the young girls. It took a lot of time to prepare for the fiesta, sometimes up to two or three

years. It was not just the father of one girl who was the "owner" of the fiesta; it was as many as five men. To have the *ani Ŝhrëati* they worked a lot. First they had to make *chacras* of sugar cane and manioc. After the owner of the ceremony called the other fathers of the girls who were going to be cut to help him. After making the house they began to make the *trapiche* ["sugarcane press"]. After making the *trapiche* they began to press the cane.

When the dresses and other clothing were ready, they squeezed the cane.[41] They had to prepare the masato for those who would help them with the sugarcane press. They called the people to help them press the cane. Then they got drunk. They called the girls who were going to be cut to inform them [to get ready]. They brought the boiled cane juice to a *chomo* to ferment it. Afterward there were 12 to 15 *chomos* full of fermenting cane juice. Then they waited for it to ferment [usually about two weeks to obtain a really strong *guarapo*]. When the *guarapo* was fermented they prepared masato [which only takes about three days]. Then they called someone who knew to try the *guarapo* to see if it was adequately fermented. Then they began drinking.

When the ceremony was very near the men began to make the *quënán* [a thigh-support, made of light balsa wood; made in sets of two from a single log, they are hollowed out to form two half-cylinders]. To make the *quënán* they have to prepare *masato* once again for the helpers. The father makes two *quënán*, two for each girl to use to sit with after the *ani Ŝhrëati*. When the *quënán* are ready they bring them to their wives to paint [the *quënán*-"designs"-on them].[42] Those who are going to hold the girls are the ones who paint the *quënán*. After they are painted and the *guarapo* is very strong they call the guests.[43] They call them to partake of the *guarapo* ; they also call those who are going to hold the girl [during the actual operation].[44] They also call the husbands of the women who are going to do the cutting.[45] They carry the *guarapo* to go in search of those who know how to cut the clitoris. They go playing the *tiati*. They go in canoes. When their destination is far [at least one meander away] they carry their mosquito netting along with them. The owners of the fiesta help the visitors bring their things. When they have arrived back [at their vilage] the owner takes the girl by the hand.[46] That is, the girl whose clitoris will be cut, the victim. The do a *ronda* [a Spanish term the Shipibo have assimilated to mean any circular dance] and sing all night long.[47] When it is nearly dawn they make the girls who are going to be cut drink [*guarapo*] so that they will get drunk.[48] In the morning, or sometimes by the middle of the day [the second day], when the girls are really drunk, then begin the operation.

If the girl is not very drunk, her father ties her up so she will not struggle.[49] Before the cutting they put designs, *cháchá* all over [the girl's] body and her face as well.[50] The place the *cháchá* on her for the next day [the

third day].[51] They place her on the *cajuin*. They put the girl on top of it.[52] The women who have painted the girl with the *cháchá* sing. When that is over they make her drink again to make her drunk.[53] Meanwhile many people are drunk and dancing a *ronda*. When they have finished cutting it they put her away to rest.

When the actual cutting is going on it is prohibited for other people to see it., especially the young people. Only the father ought to be there, at guard to prevent others from seeing.[54] [Other women put the *ŝhërvi quënti*, a special cooking vessle that, unlike normal ones, is painted and holds the water that will be used to wash the girl after the operation, on the fire to heat the water.] The fiesta will continue as long as there is beer left.[55] They put the hot water inside the vagina when it is bleeding.[56] Then they put the girl inside her mosquito netting.[57] When there still is *masato* they continue singing and dancing a *ronda*.[58]

A few minutes after the cutting they put the *ŝhërvënanti* on [the girl].[59] The *quënán* are then placed [under the girl's thighs] so that her thighs can rest.[60] When the *masato* is finished the people begin to go, little by little, back to their houses.[61]

After the cutting of the clitoris they prepare another festival, this time to cut the hair [the *Bëstëti Ŝhrëati*].[62] Only the people who took part in the *ani Ŝhrëati* are called [to participate]. The same ones who held the girl's hands then do so now. The ceremony follows the same pattern [as the *ani Ŝhrëati*]. They make *cajuin*, *chitonte*, *racoti*, *tari* [all clothes]. They call people to help press the cane. As before, they bring the animals, which have now grown big, like the *jono* ["collared paccary"; *sajino* in Spanish].[63] The husbands of the women who held the girl down [at the *ani Ŝhrëati*] are the ones who kill the animals of the owner of the fiesta.

They would invite people from Pauiyan, the Pisqui, and the upper Ucayali until the Pachitea. People would come from that far away to attend the fiesta. There was much *guarapo*. When the guests arrived they did not go directly to the fiesta. They remained at the landing to await the owner of the fiesta, who would bring *guarapo*. Then there were a lot of guests they could easily finish up two *quënpo ani*. When [the guests] are near they get the girls who are going to have their hair cut. They also get the men who will kill the animals. They carry a *chomo anitama* ["a middle to largish sized jar"] full of *guarapo* along with the *quënpos* [to drink from, to induce them to come]. They go blowing their *paca* and *tiati*. Others wait at the landing for the arrival of more guests. When they arrive they offer drink to the invited ones. [As they arrive] some women cry out and beat the water with their *huinti* ["paddles"; the women are often in the sterns with paddles, steering, while their men, with other paddles, power the canoe forward]. The guests arrive [also] playing their *tiati*. Those who arrive first wait for those who are coming a little later to fight with them, to test their strength.

Some arrive in the late afternoon, some as late as midnight. Those

who want to can arrive early for the fight. The first to arrive wait at [their host's] house for those who come later, to test their strength.[64] The women fight with other women while the men fight with the men. Those who had fallen to the ground invited those who had not to drink. Those who are thrown to the ground are offered drink by those who had not fallen. Then they form a *ronda* and dance, the men with their *huinos* on their shoulders. Those who were too drunk began to get angry when they were beaten too badly in the fight. Then the owner of the fiesta had to come and calm them down. He carried *chomo of mosato* to give to the losers so they would drink. Then they sang in a ronda with their *huinos* on their shoulders. When all the guests were inside the [big] house, the fighting ended. Everyone then began singing and dancing *ronda* all night long.

The girl's hair cutting took place in the morning [of the second day]. Then after the hair cutting they killed the *jono, yahua* ["white-lipped paccary"; *huangana* in Spanish], or *jasin* [*pauhil*, "currasow"]. They killed them with arrows. They carried the [live] animals in front of a big cross [*caros*] of balsa. The guest is the one who will kill the animals, the first one to shoot with bow and arrow. The animal is tied up in front of the big balsa *caros*.[65] When the animal has been impaled the wives [of the men who did the shooting] go and kill them by hitting them on the head with their husband's *pacas.* The women go yelling with the *pacas-"jë!, jë!, jë!"* After they have brought the dead animals they wrap them up with *racotes*. They wrap them when the bristles or feathers are still on them. Then they put the animals on the *cajuin.* The wives of the men who had killed the animals prepared the food…. Then the girls whose hair will be cut are stood near the house postsso that they can see what the people are eating.[66] They are very well dressed with a hand-spun *chitonte, coriqui teoti* [necklace made of perforated old Peruvian *soles*, or money], and a *maiti* ["crown"] of *hosho manshán* ["white heron"; *huapahuapa* in Quechua and *garsa blanca* in Spanish] plumes.[67] The *quënëa* on her [face, hands and feet] are always first class, very well drawn. [Then her hair is cut, drinking continues, and the ceremony ends on the third day.]

Now the more personalized story of Juan:

Long ago when I was young, my aunts were having an *ani Ŝhrëati* to excise the clitori of my nieces.[68] I had six nieces. They were young girls, the daughters of my sister. To cut them they had a big *ani Ŝhrëati* Their fathers prepared for the fiesta. This was a big fiesta when I was very young. To put it on, my aunts made 12 *chomo ani*. They began to make the drink. Then the old ones began to make the *trapiche*. They cut the cane to put in the press. They had to prepare *masato* [to give their helpers] in pressing the cane. Thus they worked up to the last minute. There was a lot of *masato.*

My father was the one who was going to kill the animals; the owner

of the fiesta had given the task to him. An uncle [of mine, my father's brother] and another uncle were also there to help [kill the animals]. [In all] there were six people to kill the animals: one *jono*, one *yahua*, one *jasin*, and one steamer duck. The *ani Ŝhrëati* was in Conshamay [lower Ucayali, near Contamana]. In this a*ni Ŝhrëati* they played the *paca*; the sound was very beautiful. When they played the *paca* people formed a file, first stepping to the front [in a dance], then stepping to the rear, while moving their bodies from side to side-first to the left then to the right. It was very beautiful; thus was the ancient custom. I saw it when I was a child.

The Pisquibo entered the fiesta [it was a one-day journey by canoe from the Pisqui to Contamana]. The PIsquibo entered [quiet aggressively] with their *huino* and their *huishati* in their hands-very dangerous. By the time the middle of the fiesta was reached, things were already pretty bad. The drunken ones were fighting among themselves, using their *huino* broadside.[69] They had *huino* with beautiful *quënëa* on them, and their women wore embroidered *chitonte*. Both the men and women were very well dressed.

When the fiesta was in full swing, as we say, they began the *tamaranti* music. The old women played their *tamaranti* ["overturned canoe trough"] like the men played their *ani tampora* ["two-toned signal gongs"]. The *tamaranti* was long like a *cusho* ["boat"] but very round, and the hollow opening was placed downward on the ground. The ancient ones were in a file to play it.[70] It was very pretty-*Támaran!, Támaran!, Támaran!, Támaran!* In the middle of this line of women was a very well dressed man who was standing, playing his *tampora* ["small double-headed drum"]. He had an embroidered *tari* [the best kind, one cut above the woven patterned and painted *bëpota tari*]. One can see the *quënëa* of this kind of *tari* from far away because it is black [this is rare; the common sort is white and only dyed brown with age]. Over his shoulder he had placed his *huino*. He wore a *maiti* of *hosho manshan* plumes. He was the owner of the fiesta. He played his *tampora-Ténten!, Ténten!*-shifting from side to side as he played.

Because I was a child and I saw it was dangerous, I hid beneath a raceme of plantains. The fiesta was beautiful, but at that moment it was very dangerous (*onsámëtsa*). People began to hit each other when it was morning; the sun stood [about 9:00 A.M.]. It was on the second day. When the contest was really on I saw my father in the middle of [of the fighting men]. I thought my father was going to do the same thing. Thinking that, I ran to the middle of the house garden. I went crying, thinking that my father would get hurt. But nothing happened to my father. Then they went to kill the animals wit arrows. That was beautiful. My father impaled the *jasin*. The *jasin* was his; that is, it had been placed there for him to hit. The duck was my uncle's, while my other uncle had the *jono* and the other the *yhua*.

When the *jono* was impaled it gnashed its teeth and jumped around. Then the women came running with their [husbands'] *pacas* to hit them. The *pacas* shattered. That ended the use of the *pacas*, for they would not be needed after the death of the animals. Other women came to take the *huinos* from their husbands. They went and hit the *jono* [and killed it]. Then the women picked up the animals, crying out. My aunt placed the *jono* on her shoulders and started jumping up and down. In that same moment the Pisquibo began to fight, cutting heads with their *huishatis* [not as a group against the others, but among themselves, seeking out their enemies]. Hitting and fighting with it [the *huishati*] in the hand was very dangerous. Therefore I thought it was very bad and wanted to run far away. If I had had wings I would have flown away.

After the death of the animals the women carried their dead bodies over and placed them on the *cajuin*. After they had carried them the women went off to put on a different kind of *chitonte*. At first it was a white *chitonte* [before they carried the animals]; after that it was a black embroidered *chitonte*. The *chitonte* they had previously worn they carried and used it to wrap the bodies of the dead animals. They also used the new *taris* for this purpose. After enveloping them they sang and began to fan the fire because the logs to roast them with were already there. They took the hides off the *jono* and the *yahua* and the feathers off the *jasin* and the duck. Then they butchered them and pur a new *yahuaiti quënti* on the fire [to boil].

The food was ready in the afternoon [about 2:00 P.M.]. After the food was ready they called the guests. There was music from the *tiati* and the *tampora*. By that time I was hardly afraid at all. Those who had fought earlier were now quieting down and were just drinking *masato*. Those who had fought a lot were already absent. They had left the fiesta when [the main part, the clitorectomy] was over. Women were helping their men get up. There were pools of blood beneath the leaves of the plantain trees. Blood was also spattered on the braod plantain leaves themselves. That was from the fighting during the night. I was eating *jono* meat and other meat as well because my mother was the one distributing the mean [and she gave me some extra]. After I got the meat I ran off beneath the plantain trees. I was still a little afraid and looked about constantly. Thus the *ani Ŝhrëati* was-beautiful and dangerous. I attended that fiesta and have not seen another one to rival it to this day.

In both these accounts seen through the eyes of young boys screened from the actual clitoridectomy, that episode is hardly mentioned. Instead they stress what they could see: the fighting of the men and the killing of the pets. Nevertheless, coupled with the women's comments they give a much more intimate picture of this

ceremony than is obtainable from the somewhat arid and condescending accounts of the anthropologists.

Interpretation

I found great difficulty in eliciting from people what the *ani Ŝhrëati* means. The closest I came to a speculative reason for the ceremony came from my young and relatively acculturated assistant, José. Perhaps because he was familiar with the general disapproval with which the ceremony is met, his reasoningtook on a moralistic quality although it used "native" symbols. He explained that it was really the Bad Inca-*Ŝhäno Inca*-who had taught the ceremony to the Shipibo. One day, many years ago but within the life-span of some aged people recently dead, the Good Inca returned to live again with the Shipibo. He told them not to cut the clitoris any more, that it was a great sin and that if they did not stop a great damaging wind would arise along with some rain 9but not a torrential outburst). It would be very cold and the wind would destroy the old houses and push over the plantain trees in the gardens. Thus people no longer hold the *ani Ŝhrëati*. I refer to this rationalization below, but I must add that most of what I say about the reason for the ceremony is based instead on implicit meanings derived from the way Shipibo manipulate symbols in their myths and not from anything people have overtly told me. On the other hand I have reason to believe that a few informants would agree with at least parts of my explanation.

The Clitoridectomy. Most anthropologists who have dealt with the *ani Ŝhrëati* have expressed difficulty in deciphering the reasons for the ceremony. Farabee offered an explanation of the *ani Ŝhrëati* as a sacrifice of the young girl's virginity to the moon:

This custom of defloration is common among all the Panoan tribes. Its origin and import are impossible now to determine. Among some tribes an old man performs the operation. The Panoan worship the moon: as the performance takes place at the full of the moon, it is easy to imagine, as some of them do, that the ceremony is in the nature of a sacrifice of virginity to the moon. It is a common saying that the moon makes women of girls. When you ask a man why the operation is performed, he will either say that he does not know, or that it is a way of letting everybody know the girl is a virgin. Whatever the origin, this public performance

would have a powerful influence in stimulating virtue. When asked if a man would take a girl in case the women reported she was not a virgin, they reply that all girls are virtuous. (1922:85)

Tessman, on the other hand, directly contradicts Farabee:

The event takes place on the days of the full moon, but not because the moon has any ritual connection…but because the moon provides the necessary light for their dancing and feasting. Every Tschama [Chama] laughed at any imputation concerning their practice of this ritual. (1928:206, trans. mine)

Further, Tessman was very specific about the Shipibo lack of knowledge concerning the ceremony's meaning:

No Tschama [Chama] woman or man is clear about the meaning of the female puberty rite. That such an important ritual is called the "big drinking" clearly indicates that it has lost its original religious meaning. We have the same experience when we ask why only certain animals are eaten and not others and why only at certain times.

I asked a number of Ssipibo [Shipibo], Kunibo [Conibo], and Ssetebo [Setebo] acquaintances I made about the meaning of this ritual and the amputation. Nobody was able to tell me that the removed portion of the flesh was worthless or that its removal made the girl more attractive or better of than having it. That the women became more accessible for the men-in regard to the material explanation of this custom-is denied by the Indians, probably because the portion of flesh removed in no way hinders sexual intercourse. (1928:207-208, trans. mine)

Given Tessman's perjorative opinion of the Shipibo-Conibo and his mistaken view that they lacked a consciousness of the supernatural (his book is called Men without God), any assertions he makes about Shipibo ignorance are suspect. One thing he probably was correct about, however, was theat the ceremony did not sere as a public demonstration of the girl's virginity:

That the circumcision is a "Sacrifice to the Moon" or an ascertainment that the girl is a virgin … is incorrect. This is the interpretation of the settlers, who have naturally tried to explain the meaning of this striking custom. Every Tschama [Chama] knows that none of the girls were virgins before the circumcision because of the free sexual intercourse between children. (1928:211, trans. mine)

But if the girls were not virgins, then what of the curious episode with the *bushi* ("ceramic phallus") that Karsten mentions? Is it, too, a fevered reconstruction of the mestizos? He says:

According to the statements of some traders, the old woman performing the operation not only rubs some medicinal herbs into the bleeding parts, but after a while introduces an artificial penis made of clay into the vagina, the thing being of exactly the same size as the penis of the man betrothed to her. The Indians I questioned about this detail denied the existence of such a practice. (1964:192)

I too was unable to elicit anything but giggles from women and confessions of ignorance from men when I inquired into the use of the *bushi*, which the Shipibo still make. It is possible that its continued manufacture may be an artifact of the tourist trade inasmuch as it would be an exotic item. Indeed some women related a story to me with great amusement about a German woman tourist who was so anxious to have one that she bought it before it was fired. It had been modeled and painted but was only sun dried. The comment to me was, "Wait until she tries to use it and it dissolves."

Phallic effigies are a traditional part of Shipibo material culture-witness the *hoboshco*-so why not the *bushi*? As to its use, judging from the above comments it is possible that some women might use it to masturbate while their husbands are away; yet the ease with which Shipibo women carry on extramarital affairs argues against this. Here another related function may be relevant. Ibarista told me that the *śhërvënanti*, a similar object, is periodically inserted into the girl's vagina during the period she wears it as a covering, y her mother, who uses the heel of her foot to push it into the girl's vagina *to ready her for intercourse*. We know that girls are married early, and often to older and bigger males. Although a girl may have lost her virginity in sex play with other children at an early age, it may still have been felt that she needed to be "broken in" further before marriage takes place. Therefore one of the *ani Ŝhrëati*'s meanings may simply have been to ready the girl for her new wifely role.

Having disposed of Farabee's notion that the *ani Ŝhrëati* was an offering of virginity to the moon, what about his connecting the moon with the ceremony in a larger sense? Although it is true that in the Conibo situation Farabee had only one acculturated informant who had to work through the medium of another Indian language, he may have been drawing on the comments of multiple Shipibo informants (whom he said had the same custom) when he mentions that "it is a common saying that the moon makes women of the girls" (1922:85).

Using my data from the Shipibo and similar groups, I accept Farabee's original assertion that the moon as a feminine-associated spirit is involved in the *ani Ŝhrëati*. I identify *Ŝhänto Inca*, the Bad Inca, with the moon and the moon's *avatara*, the Dragon. At the same time I identify the sun with the Bad Inca's enemy, the Good Inca. In this context José's statement that *Ŝhänto Inca* "taught" the clitoridectomy to the Shipibo takes on added significance, as does the Good Inca's opposition to the practice. In some symbolic sense during the *ani Ŝhrëati* the moon does indeed make women of the girls who are operated on.

According to Shipibo belief women are exceptionally vulnerable to aquatic seducers when they have their periods (on this, more in succeeding chapters). These seducers include the anacondas and male dolphins, both of which are aspects of the Dragon as I later define him. Further, women are identified with the aqueous realm of these seducers; they turn into manatee and dolphins. The color associated with women is black, and their province is the night-or, by extension, the dark subaquatic-subterannean underworld. The underworld is, in turn, linked with pests, sickness, and death. Menstrual blood is likewise thought to be polluting and is related to the aquatic seducers as those seducers are related to the moon. Indeed a woman's period is called "the evil of the moon" in Shipibo. In nearby groups the moon can be either a younger, mortal, and therefore "feminine" male or a female who causes the initial menstruation of women. For example in the River Camps accounts of the moon I interpret him as the subaquatic boa. He sends his long and transparent penis into the ground when his niece fools with his fish trap set up in the Tambo River. It enters her vagina when she is in the water following the blood of her first menses and causes her to become pregnant (Weiss 1975:376-377). This myth from the same cultural region incorporates the central themes from both myths 4 and 5. Thus, although for the Shipibo the moon is female the sun is male, their myths are constructed in such a way that it is possible to like the moon in them with seductive male figures of excessive libido. These same figures are also like fire, just as the Dragon does elsewhere in South America. Moreover, as in the *Yoashico* myth, the Evil Inca, who is one of those figures, uses the Dragon's weapons-stinging wasps and snakes-to keep the cultural gifts (cultigens) from mankind.

In opposition to this unsavory crowd, men are linked in Shi-

pibo culture with the colors red and yellow and the masculine sun. They can pass into the sun's celestial realm with birds or ascend to it in the form or tobacco smoke, a substance inimicable to the underwater powers. Men are symbolized by the Good Inca and are characterized by a concern for adherence to the same marriage rules the women circumvent in their amorous escapades.

One can also project this male-female opposition back to mythical times. Women originally had the penis in the form of a huge clitoris with which they ruled the men at the same time they consorted with animal ambulatory phalli. Men, aided by a bird intermediary, therefore captured the secret of the culture-fire-from one woman, the daughter of *Yoashico*. After the men killed him, the birds bathed in *Yoashico*'s blood in a local Shipibo rendition of the ubiquitous tropical forest mythical theme of "bathing in the serpents blood." To maintain their present uneasy posture of at least outward political dominance over women, Shipibo men must now control women whenever they slip back into excessive naturalism-when they menstruate, particularly for the first time-by symbolically castrating them. They do so in the form of a radical clitoridectomy performed on young girls at the time of the full moon to make them into domesticated, and therefore suitable, marriage partners.

There is only one fly in this interpretative ointment: that the operation is performed by women rather then men. Could false consciousness have developed so far among Shipibo women that they deny in ceremony what they have in reality: the real power in society? My answer to this paradox is that the *ani Ŝhrëati* may in fact represent a ceremonial denial of the sociologic conditions in which women hold power. It may be motivated by their realization that the technoeconomic system on which that power is based is a product of both sexes working on different but complementary tasks. What better way exists to express the complimentary and segregation of sex roles in Shipibo society than through the role reversal of the *ani Ŝhrëati* ceremony?

Women certainly derive from this situation many satisfactions not yet mentioned. Although the operation is painful, the girl hardly feels anything at the time because of her inebriation. Moreover the operation is part of the expected trajectory of her life and makes her suitable for the only role Shipibo culture really expects of women: that of wife and mother. In addition the girl

becomes the pivot of action for months preceding and succeeding the actual ceremony. At the height of the ceremony she is the cynosure of all eyes, dressed more beautifully than she will ever be again. Moreover her costume will include many items that are otherwise the exclusive property of men: the *maiti*, the *morośhëta*, and the highly valued and scarce *isośhëta*. Thus male and female elements and prerogatives weave through the complex warp-patterned fabric of the Shipibo *ani Ŝhrëati* just as through their beautiful textiles. The ceremony serves to validate nominal male symbolic domination of women while it leaves intact their sociologic importance.

The Fighting of the Men. The next episode of major importance in the *ani Ŝhrëati* is the fighting of the men. It in turn can be divided into two different aspects: the nonsanguinary wrestling of the hosts with the guests and the bloody slashing of hosts or guests among themselves with the *huishate*. The first aspect is how easily disposed of in view of the pantropical forest use of the fiesta as a trading and alliance mechanism, as the films on Yąnamamö feasts quiet clearly sow. In the Shipibo version both men and women demonstrate, in a friendly way, to their guests that they are not to be trifled with. One remembers the host's statement to his awaiting party if the guests are few: "Don't worry, we can take them." Groups can visit each other, exchange wives in the process (many marriages have resulted from meetings that occurred at *ani Ŝhrëati* and other fiestas), and yet still demonstrate their sovereignty.

The second aspect, the cutting with the *huishate*, requires more subtlety. On one level it seems clear that the slashing is a form of revenge for adultery. Thus I disagree with Karsten, who says:

By the mestizos and other occasional onlookers the scarification has been explained as an act of revenge prompted by jealousy…This explination however is mere supposition and is contradicted by other facts. The *wuisháte* knife-and even more the toucan beak formerly used-is a comparatively harmless miniature weapon. (1964:191)

A great deal of hostility is built up between couples as a result of the fairly continuous philandering of men and the receptivity of married women. I have been in many awkward positions by having some informants conducting affairs with the wives of other

informants, who then find out and refuse to work near or with each other. Whereas women will search out the guilty women and engage in a violent hair-pulling fight, even when they are sober, the pattern of the men's behavior seems to be withdrawal; they will not cross each other's path. They bottle up the aggression they feel until it comes out in a *huishate* fight. There is an element of culturally expected acquiescence in these matters. A man who has seduced another's wife will often submit to the *huishate* without resistance. This apparently settles matters, for is no fight occurs grudges will be held for years. If the husband finds the couple *in flagrante delicto* and if he has his *huishate* handy (unlike former days a man does not carry his *huishate* with him but hides it in the thatch of his hut, there to lie as a kind of ultimate threat), he will cut the woman, and her lover will flee. This cutting is not done in the stereotyped crown-slashing manner men use among themselves. Instead the husband merely jabs at his wife wherever he can hit her until she runs away. Her lover will then hide in the jungle near a relative's house for several days but then will probably emerge and submit to the cutting once the husband's temper has cooled.

Nor is the *huishate* "a comparatively harmless weapon" as Karsten asserts, for he was apparently ignorant of the poison a man can put on his blade. One kind is a powerful poison, derived from an unidentified floating plant, that will cause a man to suffer excruciating pain for up to two months after being cut. Whereas a man cut with an unpoisoned blade would go on dancing, blood streaming down his neck until *húastë* (*piri-piri*) is applied, a man cut with this poison is immediately carried comatose to his mosquito netting by his friends. There he will bleed profusely, becoming pallid, and his mouth will be paralyzed. A man could even die from this poison, one informant asserted. Another plant with debilitating consequences is *mastën tocéro*; one's hair falls out if it is used. These drugs will only be used if there is great enmity between two men.

Like Karsten I do not, however, assert that all of the men's actions in the *huishate* fight are conditioned by simple jealousy. In particular, I find Karsten's report that one Shipibo "declared to me that while the girls are being operated on…, the men want to show their sympathy…by performing a similar sanguinary operation upon themselves" (1964:191) very interesting, because it reinforces the complimentarity aspect of the costuming in the

fiesta. In addition these mutual cuttings would elegantly corresponding to a structural principle evident in Shipibo cosmology in particular and lowland cosmology in general: the opposition of men = above : : women = below. It may be significant that a man only cuts another man on the top of his body, the head, or if the combatants are very drunk or if the man who is attacked ducks, on his upper shoulders; whereas women cut women *below*, on the genitals. Moreover as already pointed out, when a man does cut a woman it can be on any part of her fleeing body, not just her head as in the case of her lover.

As there may be a symbolic component to the cutting, there also may be something to the men's menacing each other with their *huinos*. Karsten notes that "during these critical days they [the girls] are looked upon as being exposed to the attacks of evil spirits and many of the rites mentioned have the object of protecting them against these invisible foes" (1964:189-190). These foes are the *yoshin* spirits of the dead and Forest Ogres, which abound in Shipibo mythology. Their mention brings up the intriguing possibility that, while the *ŝhërvënanti* may serve the practical purpose of a postoperative ceramic bandage, it may also serve the magical function of keeping these *yoshin* from penetrating her body and thereby subverting the very purpose of the ceremony, when in the Lévi-Straussian sense she is "excessivly open." When the men brandish the *macana*sor *huinos* at each other, they

are now being used as weapons, although not against natural but against supernatural enemies. In other words, the swords are brandished at the dance with a view to intimidating or keeping off the evil spirits, called *joshin*, which are believed to threaten the girls on this critical occasion. (Karsten 1964:190)

If, as I believe, the whole purpose of the *ani Ŝhrëati* is to translate women from an excessively "natural" 9i.e., phallic) state *superordinate* to men to the cultured state of marriage *subordinate* to men, then men have the duty and obligation , once the operation has been performed, to protect women from the intrusion of extremely "natural" spirits who would subvert their changed status by supernatural rape.

The Killing of the Pets. The killing of the pets restates this contrast between the domestic and the wild in another form. It is

quite common for tropical forest tribes, and Panoans particularly (Braun 1975, on the Iskobakebu), to keep many "wild" animals as pets. These are frequently the young of females that have been killed as game. Often they are fed and kept nearby. Birds' flight feathers are plucked, and monkeys tied to prevent escape; but almost invariably the animals do. This is usually through the casualness of their owners, who let the feathers grow or who leave the pets to wander about by themselves. These animals are petted, played with, fed, and generally treated like what they are-pets. They are never killed for food even though animal protein is scarce and highly prized.

Thus it has a special meaning when the hosts raise these animals as domesticated pets only to let their guests (primarily the husbands of the women helpers in the host's girl's clitoridectomy) kill the tethered creatures as if they were wild animals. This aspect of the *ani Ŝhrëati* corresponds to a Cashibo festival in which they sacrifice pet peccaries and another female-associated animal, a pet tapir. Because they have raised them from infancy the women wail when the animals are slaughtered. This festival occurs in September or October and is accompanied by dancing and drinking, but it is not stated to be a female puberty rite. It is a fertility rite.

There are also a prescribed assortment of animals to be killed in the *ani Ŝhrëati*, generally *jasin* ("razorbilled currasow"), *jono* ("white-lipped peccary"), and *yahua* ("collared peccary")- all favored game animals noted for their tasty and abundant flesh. I have no specific data on the *jasin* other than myth 10, in which it is one of a class of black birds (like the feminine-associated vulture, *poincosco*) that protects the fire a bird has stolen for man from the Evil Inca (i.e., the Dragon), who wants to put it out with a tempest. Thus it is a Dragon-opposing bird, but a *black* one and therefore a bird anomalously associated with women like the little *shihuango* the saddened woman of myth 5 turned herself into after the death of her anaconda (Dragon) lover. Thus the balance of the *jasin*'s associations appear to be with females, making it an appropriate bird for sacrifice at the female puberty rite.

The peccary, the other kind of sacrificed creature, is even more transparently feminine in its associations. The Shipibo recognize the peccary as the customary prey of the jaguar, a male animal in its normal yellow configuration. Thus peccaries, here as elsewhere in the lowlands, are associated with women. The

Yąnamamö, for example, have a woman nearly transformed into a peccary until she is rescued for culture by having her pursuing husband "deglove" her animal skin (Wilbert 1966:233). Several characteristics of the peccary seem to have singled it out for such an equation: its evil smell; the fact that like the armadillo (a womb symbol) it roots in the feminine earth (Lévi-Strauss 1973:343, on the Kogi); above all that it is noisy and, by extension, libidinous. Peccaries are promiscuous humans turned into animals (Lévi-Strauss 1969:85, on the Mundurucú) or are associated with the loudest antural noise, thunder (1969:208, on the Kayapó; 209-210, on the Tenetehara and Tarirapé). Thunder *yoshin* are, among the Shipibo, associated with feminine waters. Thus in the context of the ceremony the peccary is linked with the excessive libidinousness of women in their precultural state when they were the caretakers of cultural elements but not their generators, before men stole the power from them.

Even though the narrator of many of the myths cited was a woman herself, women are always depicted as being libidinous. They get involved with animal seducer figures quite frequently. In myth 2 a woman is seduced by a freshwater dolphin; in myth 4, by both a giant earthworm and a jaguar; and in myth 6, by a tapir. Such women constantly have to be rescued for culture and the marriage rules of human (but not animal) society by the very men they have previously spurned. Thus it seems fitting in a ceremony that "domesticates" women through an act of autocastration to kill the "wild" female-associated animals that stand for women's animal past, even though they are really domesticated. The *ani Ŝhrëati* presents a symmetrical contrast, an inversion, women = wild → civilized (*ani Ŝhrëati*) versus animals = pets (domesticated) → wild (*ani Ŝhrëati*). On one level the pets are killed to feed the guests and thus show the host's powers of consumptive display, while on another these particular animals reverse the ceremonial trajectory of the girls and, by their grisly fate, validate the girls' passage from Nature to Culture via their mediating role as domesticated animal pets.

Seen as a presentation of complementary by antagonistic roles, the *ani Ŝhrëati* contrasts with more transparent ceremonies of sexual dependency and antagonism such as the *Oyne* rite of the Cubeo, wherein males menace females with a large bark cloth phalli, throw them to the ground, and finally engage in intercourse with

each other's wives (Goldman 1964:117). In the *Oyne* the males dominate the females directly but end by losing the adherence to the marriage rules they symbolize as males, whereas in the *ani Ŝhrëati* the men symbolically dominate the females indirectly through the agency of females and so end by gaining the adherence to those same rules. Either the system starts with the same basic assumption, that males must control females for human society to function but that in the sexual act of control the female actually subjugates the male. Perhaps because women play a bigger role in Shipibo society than they do in Cubeo society, Shipibo women are able to limit their conquest to the symbolic domain, whereas among Cubeo the sexual combat takes place in actual behavior. The Shipibo ceremony starts with castration and ends in marriage, whereas the Cubeo ceremony begins in erection and ends in promiscuity. In the first case sexual aggression is turned inward on women by women; in the second it is projected outward by men on women.

The *ani Ŝhrëati* is an acting out of the mythical role reversal on ever succeeding generation of females. It starts with women in control publicly (the original women were Amazons) and men in control privately (they menstruated); it ends after the ceremony with men in public control and women in private control (i.e., men present the political front of domination and women privately make all the decisions). Through the states of the ceremony to the fighting of the males and the killing of the pets, we see the same interplay of contrastive but complimentary elements: Girls become women by losing a function of their femininity and by wearing male accoutrements; women subjugate themselves symbolically while being given center stage by men; men cut themselves to protect the women; and domesticated pets are killed as if they were wild animals. Ever since Bateson (1976) showed the stages through paradox and since Shieffelin (1976) showed the complexity of opposition scenarios in the equally paradoxical *Gisaro* ceremony of the Bosavis, we have known that although the actions of rite are often cryptic its messages need not be. I hope I have shown through analysis of the Shipibo *ani Ŝhrëati* ceremony and its mythical correlates that South Amerindian ceremonies are as capable of multilevel statements as are their Melanesian counterparts.

Shipibo Cosmology Reconstructed

The following reconstruction is just that. Missionary influence and acculturation have played havoc with any coherent Shipibo cosmologic vision that might have existed. What exists today are vague pieces of information embedded in myths or shaman's songs and whatever can be elicited from ordinary informants. The myths themselves have survived much better than the cosmologic system of which they are a part. Hence I have to use some of the currently available ethnographic data to supplement my information. Clearly this is an area where much work needs to be done, particularly with less acculturated informants in remote tributaries along the central and upper Ucayali. Nevertheless a schematic picture can be worked out that shows many correspondences with other South Amerindian lowland systems.

Two different but related cosmologic schemes have been reported for the Shipibo-Conibo. The most plausible one sees the earth as a flat, circular disc with rivers running down to its edge or around the edges (Tessman 1928:183, 197). Below and above the earth-disc are the other similarly organized worlds, but their order and number are in dispute. Farabee, speaking of Shipibo beliefs, mentions

> Three heavens, all above, where the souls of the dead go. There were but two until white men came, when the lowest heaven was invented for them, the next higher for all the savages, and the highest for themselves, who are not savages but civilized men. (1922:104)

Note that the lowest heaven is related to the white men. Elsewhere (as among the River Campa) they are placed even lower, in the subaquatic underworld. Indeed Farabee's lowest heaven may be the underworld, inasmuch as my informants mentioned five worlds, two above (which correspond to Farabee's two original worlds) and two below, with earth in the middle. Also, as the *Yanapuma* myth (myth 9) points out, white men are associated with caves, the entryway into the underworld. What my informants did say was that there were people under the earth, and under the water, who live as we do. The heavens curve downward at the corners like a rainbow; that is, they are semicircular and are arched over the flat earth.

Anderson, abstracting from others, mentioned a competing quadrangle model:

Heaven is a big Shipibo village inhabited by *Iba* [the sun?] and the spirits of the dead. The central points of Heaven and Earth are connected by a stairway, along which the spirits of the dead ascend. At the end of it, there is a gigantic cross. The universe is quadrangular. The cross and the quadrangule are the most common symbols in Shipibo art, thus attesting to its religious nature. (n.d.)

It is true that the *caros* ("cross") is the seminal motif in Shipibo art and that it may well reflect Christian influence, but no artists I worked with considered it a religious symbol. The cross, again probably the Christian cross, is also mentioned in Manuel's *ani Ŝhrëati* account as a place where the animals were tied for execution. As to the existence of the whole model Anderson describes, I could get little confirmation other than the bit of information that the most prominent Southern Hemisphere constellation, the Southern Cross, is called the "World Cross," although when questioned people denied that the world itself was laid out that way. This does not mean that a direction quadrant is incompatible with the circular model, because the myths reflect a clear awareness of the cardinal points. As myth 1 states, "from where the sun rises and from where the sun sets. The noise will also come from the north and from the south." That last phrase was added for my benefit by the informant, who had originally pointed up- and downriver with reference to the Ucayali, which flows from the south to the north. Together with the trajectory of the sun, the river orientation of the Shipibo gives them an awareness of the quadrants, but wherether it also incorporates a quadrangular universe is a moot point.

In this universe there seems no doubt that a heaven for souls exists above the earth. Farabee presents a picture somewhat influenced by the missionaries:

The good and bad all go to the same place at death. Heaven, or the place of the dead, is much like the earth, except that there are no storms, and sunshine always. There are no enemies, or hardships, but plenty of game, fish, and women. All live above eternally, and there is no resurrection of return to earth. There is very little difference between the treatment of the good and bad, except that the bad may have more difficulty in getting food. (1922:104)

The concept of the soul itself is called "*kayá.*" "It is this shadow-like image of the body, the second-self of man, which

leaves the body at the moment of death, and is believed to follow the body to the grave" (Karsten 1964:201, on the Shipibo). My informants clearly indicated that the soul flied through the air, presumably to the heaven referred to above. They further believe that when one sleeps one's soul leaves the body while playing a *Quena* ("highland") flute, which the Shipibo call "*rëwa*" and with which the soul journeys afar, its high-pitched sound being heard especially when the soul is leaving and entering the body. The soul must play the flute constantly or it will be lost and fall down somewhere. When the soul is flying through the air a hunter may shoot it with a shotgun, but not with bow and arrow, and it will fall to the ground as a *mëshantiu* (Spanish, *toyuyo*, the jabiru stork, *Jabiru mycteria*), a big stork. In that case the sleeper will be left a corpse. The soul can also be easily lost, so one must take care not to wake a sleeper too rapidly.

Although the soul is linked to a bird and placed in a celestial heaven, there are some indications that the Shipibo also place souls in the subterranean realm. As is so frequently the case in the lowlands, things tend to come in twos. Thus there are often two places of residence for souls in South Amerindian cosmologies: One is in the celestial sphere, which harbors privileged souls; and one is in the underworld, where ordinary or disesteemed souls dwell.

One of the bits of evidence that the Shipibo place some kinds of souls in the underworld comes from archaeology. The Shipibo are one of the few aboriginal groups in the world who have a specific term for *potsherd: quënquësh*. The Shipibo visit archaeological sited to mine them for potsherds because vessel fragments exposed to thousands of years of weathering are much more friable than their own hard pottery and can with greater ease be ground up to form one category of ceramic temper.

Moreover, starting with Lathrap in the 1950s and going on through a number of his students in the following years, at least some Shipibo are familiar with archaeologists and their search for and collection of *quënquësh*. Those potsherds, particularly when they come from the Late Prehistoric styles such as Cumancaya that are recognizably like modern Shipibo-Conibo ware, are often identified as the work of the ancestors. The sherds, and sometimes whole vessels, naturally come from beneath the ground, so that all of the potentially malevolent powers attached to ghosts, spirits

(*yoshin*), or similar underworld figures are also attached to the pottery. This generalized "power" of the pottery is therefore thought by the Shipibo who have worked for archaeologists to be dangerous, particularly for their youngest children-to the point that Shipibo workmen link any illness their children might suffer while they are away to the fact that they are working with *quënquësh*. Indeed I have a case in which the death of a child was related to the proximity of a lot of *quënquësh* in a house an archaeologist was working in. Shamans can attempt to cure such afflicted children by communicating directly, through the consumption of ayahuasca (*nishi*), a powerful hallucinogen, with the spirits of the ancestors embodied in the *quënquësh*. In that sense ancestors are identified with the earth.

There is another link between ancestors, ghosts, and the subterranean world. Aboriginal Shipibo-Conibo buried both adults and children in a flexed or semifetal position in burial urns (actually *quënti ani*), which, to judge from other lowland data, corresponds to a kind of ceramic womb. Thus the very act of burial also was an act of impregnation of the earth with the spirits of the dead, who were going to be born again. As frequently happed in the jungle, those sybterranean spirits of the dead are viewed as dwarfs.

Karsten's information on the newly instituted custom of burying the dead in cemeteries is pertinent here:

On the day after the death the corpse is taken out through the door and carried to the burial place. Ashes are profusely scattered on the ground in the wake of the procession. On the following day, I was told, the survivors can clearly trace in these ashes the footprints of the deceased as he left the house, and close behind his they can discern the small prints of the evil demon that killed him-prints like those of a small man-when the patient's death had been caused by witchcraft. The ceremonies at the grave are further illustrations of the fear in which the survivors stand of the death spirit which carried off the deceased and which may be looking for more victims among the living. When the grave has been filled with earth, ashes are profusely strewn upon the tomb so that it is covered with a thick layer, and the women sitting at the tomb utter loud cries and wails and incessantly strew ashes upon their own hair. The ashes professedly serve as a protection for the women and other survivors against the evil death demon. (1964:206)

Here the death spirit is a dwarf. This association makes sense if underground dwellers are dwarfs and if the underworld is a place of death[71] In the general model the underworld is equated with

the night, and the night with the center of the forest where the evil spirits upwell from the underworld to afflict mankind. There is evidence for this chain of associations in Shipibo cosmology as well.

The Shipibo strike one as ghost afflicted. The night swirls with an assortment of demons, narrow escapes from which are easily elicitable reminiscnence from nearly any informant, particularly the males, who tend to venture abroad at early evening more than women do. It is particularly in their plethora of undifferentiated demons, or *yoshin*, that I am reminded of a similar description for the Dugum Dani of highland New Guinea (Heider 1970:135). In such tribal societies the dead merge with the demons of the night in a motley order. Burga Freitas (1939:61), for example, tried to identify the "*yushin*" with the night-flying bird of evil omen, the *chicua*; but that is only one kind of *yoshin*. There are many kinds. However they are differentiated, the *yoshin* were clearly "the souls of the dead Indians, especially the souls of dead medicine-men or sorcerer" (1939:196). They are mostly malevolent, invisible, and active at night. They play the local Shipibo role of Forest Ogre:

The Shipibo fance that the *joshin* tries to entice the hunter to follow him, offering him a mysterious fruit called *pihuai* and promising to become his friend and assistant. If he accepts the offer and takes the fruit and follows the demon into the interior of the forest, he will go mad or fall ill and die. (1939:196)

The *yoshin* are also identified with thunder and lightning, which are also considered evil spirits. "The Shipibo of the Ucayali have the idea that thunder and lightning are caused by evil demons, *joshin*, running through the air" (Burga Freitas 1939:45). Myth 8 further identifies the lightning *yoshin* with the mountain where he dwells. Caves in mountains are as good an entryway into the underworld as are deep pools of water. Mountain caves are also homes of other ogres like the *huiso inon* of myth 9.

Thus the establishment of two domains for the dead would seem to answer a contradiction in Shipibo cosmology. Why, is the inhabitants of the celestial heaven are always pictured as happy and benevolent, are the Shipibo so afraid of ghosts and spirits of the dead? The answer might be that the malevolent dead, like the sorcerers mentioned earlier, never ascend into the sky but instead remain underground. Alternatively, the ascent may be a gradual process with the newly dead arising out of the ground at night to

accost people on jungle paths or pelt their houses with clods of mud; then, as their tie to the living lessens, they ascend to the heavens either by the literal stairway already mentioned or by the figurative one discussed later, there to reside forever as benevolent but noninterfering spirits. The riverine Panoans once regarded the earth as having been very close to the heavens (Tessman 1928:199). It was only later that they occupied their present separated positions. I believe that the central pillar holding up the multiple worlds of the Shipibo cosmos is a gigantic World Tree. Myth 7 clearly shows the *lupuna* tree as a World Tree. In that myth an old man who is really a tapir, *ahua*, kicks a *guayaba* tree and it shoots up to turn into a giant *lupuna*. The tapir is the guardian of the World Tree in other lowland myths, so his association with the *lapuna* is understandable in the Shipibo context.

By a complicated train of associations the World Tree is usually associated with the devouring Dragon and its minor form, the frog, and then, via the powerful poisons certain species of tree frogs possess, with fish poison. Therefore it is significant that this specific version of the World Tree, the *lupuna*, exudes a powerful poison in its sap. To quote from Karsten, who gived an extended description of this tree in Shipibo culture:

Its scientific name is *Trichilla tocacheana* of the *Meliaceae* family. The Shipibo call it *shóno*, and all Ucayali tribes have much the same ideas about it. It is a tall, beautiful tree, 25 to 50 meters in height. Its crown is spreading and umbrella-like and forms its most characteristic feature…. The tree occurs on the lower Río Santiago and Huallaga, and on the Middle Ucayali… Its sap is said to be very poisonous. The soul of the lupuna tree is an evil demon or *joshin* which appears to the Indian narcotized by *ayahuasca* as an evil wizard smoking an enormous pipe (*shinitápo*). The sap of the tree (called *virote* in the Loreto dialect and *yovui* in … Shipibo…) forms the mysterious poison which the wizard secretly sends against those whom he wants to harm… The wizard first prepares some tobacco medicine by crushing some tobacco leaves and thoroughly mixing them with saliva. This is put into the small ornamented clay pot called the *ronkon*, which, together with the ceremonial tobacco pipe, forms his most important equipment. Then, during the evening, he makes a deep cavity in the stem of the lupuna tree, so that the poisonous sap begins to flow. The clay pot containing tobacco juice is fastened in the cavity in the stem of the tree, covered with bark, and left for the night. During the night the demon of the tree will allow its poison to run down into the clay pot, and when the wizard arrives in the morning the poisonous medicine is ready. (1964:198-202)

The *lapuna* tree is indeed treated with great reverence by the Shipibo, who will invariably point one out to the traveler when they are on the trail. One of the peculiarities of Shipibo mythology is its emphasis on the tree spirits, which control a wide range of specified plants (Girard 1958:198). In the words of Karsten:

Every particular tree and plant has its indwelling spirit, which forms the principle of its life and growth. When a tree is felled, this is regarded as an offense against its spirit. Every tree has what the Indians call its "mother" (and which he equates with "soul"). (1964:198)

Therefore the *lapuna* tree is not the only one to which the Shipibo give a mythological or shamanistic importance.

Another characteristic of the World Tree is that it is covered with spines to indicate its dangerous nature and to protect it against culture heroes like the Magical Twins who seek to cut it down to obtain its hidden fruits. The Shipibo single out another tree with precisely these characteristics:

…called the *anáh*… This tree is endowed with big spines and also has a soul which works evil. Its sap is said to be so poisonous that if a person consumes it he will die. Owing to its poisonous properties, the sap is used when fishing to stupefy the fish. (Karsten 1964:200)

With the *anáh* the symbolism has gone full circle, from the poisonous sap of the *shóno* to the spines of the *anáh* and then to its sap as a fish poison. In many pats of the lowlands the World Tree is hollow and contains fish, the waters of its interior communicating with the waters of the subaquatic region. Perhaps instead of a ladder the original Shipibo souls rose through the hollow trunk of the World Tree to reach the heavens. When the World Tree is cut down a gigantic World Flood issues from its severed trunk. The Shipibo have precisely that legend (Burga Freitas 1939:50-52), as is also evident in myth 1. Although I never witnessed any ritual of this kind, Anderson (n.d.) does relate the *lupuna* tree to rain-celestial waters:

During rain-making ceremonies, the shaman smokes a pipe called *shinitapo*. He crouches under the sacred *lupuna* tree, blows tobacco smoke to the ground and weeps. The smoke rises to the clouds and provokes rain. His tears symbolize the rain.

If true, this ritual would indicate that tobacco smoke stimulates celestial rain, whereas my data indicate it is inimical to subaquatic creatures, presumably because it rises upward. According to one informant, there are villages of people below the

water, and the one substance they cannot stand is tobacco smoke.

This aquatic realm is identified with women, who go to it to make love with aquatic seducers, as in myth 5, or who have the seducers come to them, as in myth 2. The following short myth Inesia related shows this connection:

Anciently, a Man and His Wife Were Playing Like Otters

Anciently, a Shipibo man and his wife where down in the stream, playing like otters. He said to her, "You swim and I will play like a fisherman and try to stab you with my lance." She agreed, but when she was hit she changed into a manatee [*Manatus australis*]. She still has human feet, but slowly they disappeared to form the tail flipper manatee have today. Her *chitonte* and very black *racote* remained where she had left them on the canoe landing. The husband threw the *racote* into the water and it became transformed into the small black [gray] freshwater dolphin. For that reason the manatee and the dolphin swim together down to the present day.

There is a particular stress laid in Shipibo mythology on the relationship between menstrual blood and aquatic seducers, largely on the logic that menstruation is a blatant manifestation of woman's animality, of her excessive "openness," which aquatic seducers seek to fill-both literally and figuratively. The Shipibo parallel other Panoan groups, like the Cashinahua (Kensinger 1975:52), in prohibiting women from bathing in the lakes or rivers when they are menstruating. Instead they have to bring up water in a jar and bathe on dry land. The reason the Shipibo give for this practice is that during their periods women are particularly susceptible in the dolphin's domain.

Manuel narrated to me a short myth of the common "fish in the body of a snake" type wherein this connection between menstrual blood and the aquatic boa are reiterated:

The Mother of All Water Creatures

The huge boa is the "mother" of all water creatures, including the dolphin. At one time it contained all water creatures in its stomach. A boa formed a bridge over the water on which all the first people crossed from shore to shore. This happened until one day a woman crossed the boa-bridge while she was menstruating. Some of her manstrual

blood fell on the boa's back. It reacted sharply by shaking all the people off its back attempting to wash off the blood. Thus it no longer forms a bridge for man.

The boa is commonly aligned with the rainbow, which is further viewed as the herald of disease, just as the boa produced all of the noxious insect and animal pests in myth 3. The Shipibo make this same association between the boa and the rainbow (Girard 1958:141, 196), as well as the subsidiary association (also shown in the myth, as in the myth 5 role of *nishvin*, the boa's wasp) among boas, rainbows, and noxious insect pests such as wasps and spiders in shamans' curing songs. For example, from the tape-recorded songs of Juan, José's father, when he was under the influence of *nishi* in a curing session come the following associations: He sang of the "evil-smelling" clouds swirling within the sick child'c chest; he referred to the "venom" of the clouds, that they were cold and evil clouds of the "rainbow," and how they were dispersing under the efficacious influence of his curing songs. In a later song he referred to the "spider's web" of clouds within the child's body. In the tapes curing songs of another shaman, Olegario, we find the direct and expectable linkage made, "the web of the rainbow" and "the web of the [bad] air." Evil smell, coldness, noxious insect pests, and diseases are all common characteristics of the underworld and its subaquatic denizens like *ronin* ("the anaconda") or *huiso capë* ("the black cayman").

Because he is constructed out of these figures, the Dragon also shares these traits. The local form of the Dragon in Shipibo mythology is the Evil Inca, *Yoashico*. He places venomous snakes and stinging wasps on the original cultigens to keep them from mankind. Against him the greatest epithet a lowland Indian can imagine is hurled: the Stingy One. The things of culture, cultigens and fire, must be taken from him indirectly via his daughter, Venus, by helpful bird intermediaries.[72] The continent-wide association of the moon with Venus, as well as the moon's similar role in lowland myth, argue for a moon-*Yoashico* linkage.

The birds play a key role in accompanying shamans in their curing role to the realm of the sun in the sky. Further, the sun is identified with the (Good) Inca (Girard 1958:263, 266; Izaquirre 1922-1929, 1:316-317). The lyricism of the association between the benevolent Inca, the sun, gold, and birds comes out in one of Olegario's curing chants in which he sings of going to see *non inca*

riossen ("our Inca God") by way of the "Great Light": "We are the men of the light of gold with a great crowd of *pinón* ["hummingbirds"] in the air surrounding us. *Shähuan* [*guacamayo*] are our companions."

In turn, both the sun and the moon are the children of an otiose creator god, *Habi* or *Otcipapa* ("grandfather").[73] The Conibo are early recorded by Izaquirre (1922-1929, 1:316-317) as believing that the sun (*Bari*) is the son of *Habi* and the moon (*Use*) is his daughter. The sun got his brighter glow by smearing his sister-wife's face with *nanë* in a direct inversion of the normal pattered wherein the sister marks her incestuous moon-brother with genipa. In this case the same structural relationships hold. The moon is *both* wife and sister of the son; the marking is inverted by being applied to the female. Although the sex of the moon changes, the fact this it, not the sun, is the one marked does not. The moon, *Ōŝhë*, originally lived on earth but later ascended into the sky (Girard 1958:252, on the Shipibo),[74] as did her sons by the sun. They climbed into the heavens on a chain of arrows similar to the ladder of arrows used in myth 8 to become the Pleiades (Burga Freitas 1939:43-44, on the Conibo).

Shipibo cosmology shows an easygoing egalitarianism about the ways humans and animals can change their form, often by simply changing their clothes. For example, in myth 3 a boa changes his *tari* and becomes a man. In some myths, such as myth 6, this act of transformation becomes very subtle as animals alter their shapes in response to the unspoken thoughts of humans. There is no dividing line between human and nonhuman animals, particularly in myth. As myth 6 begins, "The first people and animals were capable of speech like we are."

This does not mean that the Shipibo do not distinguish between kinds of people and kinds of animals and equate one with the other; they do. This becomes clear in the way that Shipibo distinguish between a good, or curing shaman, who is associated with light-colored celestial birds, and the evil, or bewitching, shaman, or witch doctor, who is linked with wasps, maggots, and thorns. These two specialists even use different hallucinogenic plants. The good shaman, or medicine man, cures with *nishi*, the jungle liana (*Banisteriopsis caapi*), which contains powerful alkaloids with LSD-like effects. I witnessed the preparation of *nishi* by several shamans. One of them, Antonio, preparing for a curing session that was to take place later that night, took the *nishi* vine

and cut it into sections about 12 cm. long and shredded each section a little-probably to make the sap come out quicker. He placed the contents in a small *quënti* along with some water and put it on a special fire in the plaza (not in the cook fire under the roof of the cookshed, the domain of women). He then added the *cawa* leaf.[75] He cooked the contents of the *quënti vacu* for about one hour and then expressed some liquid. He spilled some on the dirt of the plaza but carefully picked it up with the tip of his machete and flung the moist clod into the *chacra* surrounding the plaza. He put what was left in the pot on the fire again along with the original sections of *nishi*. This was probably to strengthen the solution. Later he added some more water. Every now and then he poked at it with a bamboo stick, stirring it. He removed it after 5 hours of cooking and took the cawa out. What remained was an opaque brown liquid, very bitter to the taste.

It is true that for the Shipibo narcotic plants play a less important role then they do for some other groups, like the Jívaro (Karsten 1964:200-201). Many Shipibo men have never tried *nishi* and are afraid to do so, fearing the bad visions that sometimes accompany the use of the drug. Also, unlike the Peruvian mestizo *ayahuasqueros* (Dobkin de Rios 1972), who sometimes use the drug recreatively, among the Shipibo only shamans use it and then only to call the spirits to cure with their aid.

The effects of the drug follow a well-documented pattern (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1972a), with nausea and vomiting often accompanying the first infusion of the bitter liquid. Then a series of ill-organized phosphors fill the peripheries of one's vision, floating in the blackness of the night. They are followed by a brilliant kaleidoscope of shifting, multicolored geometric patterns that succeed themselves in a bewildering array, filling one's field of vision. Then, as the vision deepens, animal figures appear, large felines and large snakes taking pride of place. They can menace the novice celebrant, but the experienced shaman knows them well.[76] At the same time there is a feeling of the dissolution of one's body, or of flying. It is at this stage that the shaman ascends to heaven escorted by flocks of radiant birds. Then the visions taper off and gradually cease.

According to my informants, the good spirits of *nishi* look like long monocolored filaments that arch from their point of origin, to intermediate areas, and finally return to descend among the circle of the curing ritual. For example, in one rite held at the small

village of Santa Clara near San Francisco de Yarinacocha on the middle of the Ucayali, the *nishi* spirits came from the sacred riverine Panoan site of Lake Cumancaya to the south, on the upper Ucayali above the mouth of the Pachitea River, passed over Yarinacocha and went to Canshahuaya, the mythically important site on the lower Ucayali below the Rîo Cushabatay to the north, where a huge *chomo* lies buried in the mountain. They finally reappeared at Santa Clara in the middle.

It is a peculiarity of *nishi* that a shaman will remain partially lucid while he is under its effects. He can carry on a conversation, albeit somewhat distantly, after he has drunk the potion. Yet, punctuated by a stereotyped long-drawn-out sigh, the shaman will abruptly drift off beyond the power of human conversation and begin his falsetto songs. Sometimes he will sing into his cupped hands to form a resonating chamber to alter even further the characteristics of his voice. He will occasionally sing in a kind of pseudo-Quechua, but for the most part his songs are in Shipibo leavened with a few Spanish words or phrases. The songs will rise and fall through three nights, beginning about 9:00 P.M. and continuing until the early hours of the morning. At times more then one shaman will sing at once, either in a duet or in an alternating pattern, with the more regarded, or powerful, shaman taking the lead while the junior shaman acts as his helper. The helper is content to supply a background hum.

Clustered around the shaman will be the concerned members of the afflicted family. If the patient is an infant, and it often is, the mother will hold it inside her mosquito netting while the shaman and others sit outside, the shaman occasionally blowing strong tobacco smoke over the child's body to aid the efficaciousness of his songs.[77]

It is a powerful and moving spectacle as late at night a moon-bathed plaza resounds with the shaman's unearthly falsetto while bats flit past broad, swaying banana leaves and from the nearby lake the curiously human coughing of the freshwater dolphins expelling air from their blowholes drifts toward the huddled circle of people. At that moment, even for the anthropologist busy swatting mosquitoes, tape-recording the songs, and noting the actions and attitudes of the participants, the spirits live and the fragility of human society in its cleared and ordered little space within the vast black wall of the surrounding jungle becomes all too clear.

If the good shaman uses *nishi* to cure his patients, the bad shaman uses *toé* to bewitch them. In the words of Karsten:

The Shipibo know another magical medicine comparable with…*nishi*…, although it is even stronger. This is the narcotic *toé*, prepared from a species of *Datura* and belonging to the poisonous family *Solanaceae*….Among the Shipibo it is used only by wizards who wish to put themselves into an ecstatic state for certain purposes. *Toé* as a narcotic is not prepared by boiling; a small quantity of the juice in the stem of the bush is squeezed out and put into a small gourd. Taken by the medicine-man it produces fantastic dreams and visions of the same kind as those produced by…*nishi*. (1964:205)

Whereas the good shaman consumes a "cooked," and therefore cultured, hallucinogen, the evil shaman drinks a "raw" and bewitchingly natural brew. The wizard also drinks the natural poisonous sap of the *lupana* tree, *yovui.* Indeed, he is called "*yoshin yovui*," literally, "poison demon," thus showing his assimilation to the ogreous horde protecting the World Tree from human interference. *Yovui*

is regarded as a living demonical entity which the medicine-man keeps in his throat. When he wants to bewitch a person he expels it with a hawking motion and a certain conjuration. The demonical being returns to its master after it has executed his command. To impart the art of witchery to another Indian the older medicine-man squirts a little of the *virote* or poison into his mouth, together with some tobacco water. During the next six months the novice must carefully observe certain rules, especially in his diet.[78] He frequently takes tobacco juice, which he obtains by chewing the leaves and spitting them into a small clay vessel.[79] He also takes the narcotic *nishi* (ayahuasca)….He abstains from eating the fat of swine and other animals, salt, and big fish like the gamitana and paiche. He eats mainly small fish, roasted green plantain and masato.[80] After the six months have elapsed he is allowed to eat everything except swine's flesh, which is always carefully avoided by him. (Karsten 1964:202)

In addition to consuming "raw" poisons the *yoshin yovui* shares other characteristics with the Dragon. He can mutate into a poisonous snake or an anaconda (Girard 1958: 71, 132-133). He uses wasps, maggots, and sharp *chonta* thorns as his "arrows," which he lodges in his victims. He also sens the small black night bird, *charar*, to carry his poison to the house of one he wants to harm (Karsten 1964:202). It is no wonder that nearly every time I saw this bird fly by a Shipibo compounds at dusk the resident male would throw a stick at it to send it on its way.

In keeping with the dualism of Shipibo cosmology, then, there are two shamans, one specializing in good and the other in evil. Each are responsible for the contrasting worlds of golden yellow celestial sun, birds, and curing, and the black night of raw poisons, stinging insects, snakes and thorns, devouring anacondas, disease, and cold waters. Between these two realms most Shipibo tread, and few of them reflect that out of these contrasting but interpenetrating spheres a world lies in ruins-the world of the complex aboriginal Shipibo cosmology that we see hidden behind its pitiful remnants-but which is reconstructable in outline using the comparative data of other lowland tribes.

III



The Model

The Cosmic Layer Cake

Figure 3 depicts the model I have built out of the ethnographic date of many lowland groups and with which the specific Shipibo data can be compared. The depiction falls short for at least two reasons: It is overly schematic because not all features can be recorded legibly on a single diagram, and its dynamism is too static, or synchronic, because the time dimension it covers is limited to a single day. The following explication of the model fleshes out this cartoon to a degree, with more meat being added later.

Although I am concerned with the short range of change a day encompasses, it is possible to refer to the problem of a longer periodicity. The daily circuit recapitulates cyclic alterations of much greater diachronic scope. South American cosmologies are dynamic in time, not static. The worlds depicted in Figure 3 are members of only one cyclic variation, the current one. These worlds are the successors of previous imperfect worlds, destroyed long ago by flood or fire (Civrieux 1970:21-22, on the Makiritare; Wagley 1977:176, on the Tapirapé), just as in the Andean and Mexican systems. They were populated by doomed creatures and imperfect protohumans who were turned to stone (Farabee 1924:83, on the Macusi).

The base of these oscillations is a dyadic succession of a terrestrial flood ending the world followed by the extinction of life on the second world by celestial fire. In turn, the current world will also end in a way that repeats the initial emergence of mankind,

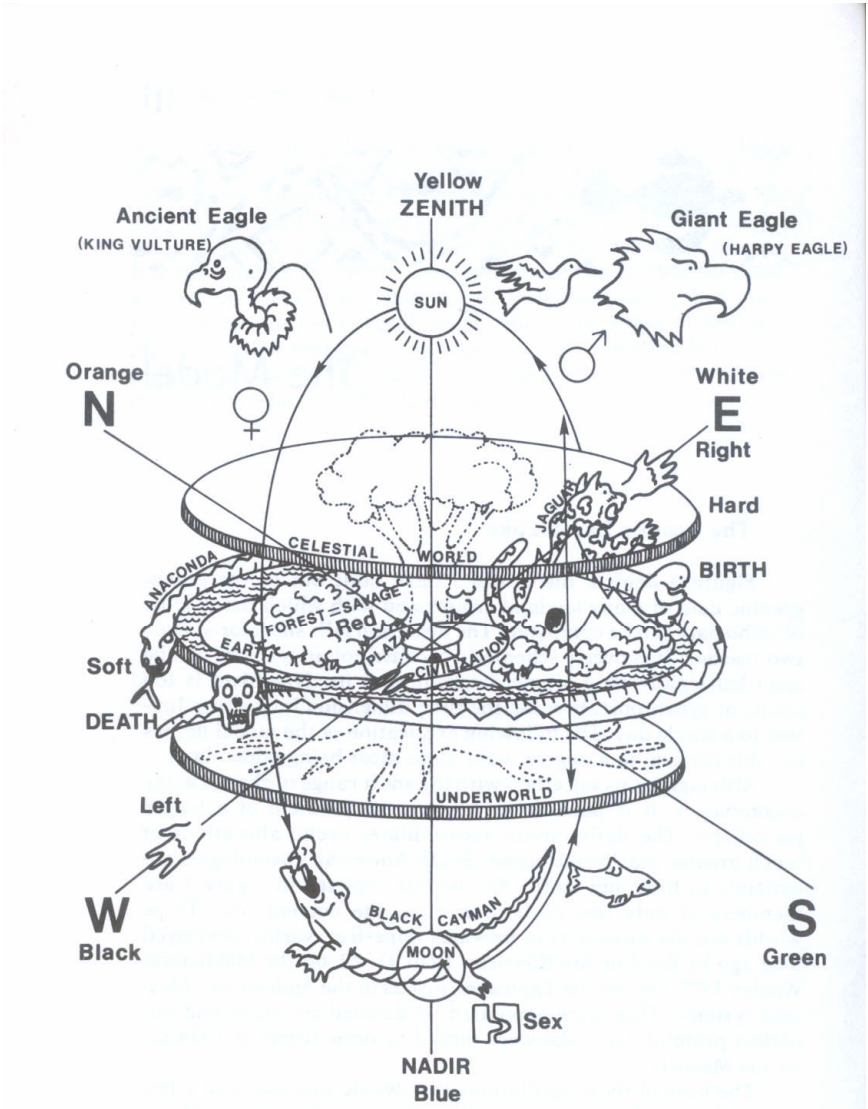


Figure 3. Schematic Rendering of the Model

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devoured by monsters (Powlison 1971-1972:72-74, on the Yagua), by having the huge demons become houses to swallow their human inhabitants (Weiss 1975:286, on the River Campa). All the periodicities used in the model recapitulate each other on ever-descending and narrowing levels, rather like the pattern Lévi-Strauss (1967) sketched for the Asdiwal-Waux cycle of Northwest Coast mythology. This primal cosmic periodicity is then linked to the yearly periodicity of the seasons through the analogous lowland contrast set: wet season-dry season. That, in turn, is linked to the monthly periodicity of women's physiological cycle: menstruation-receptivity (Hugh-Jones 1974:159, on the Barasana). Last, all these levels are represented in the daily periodicity of the night-day cycle (Dumont 1976, on the Panare). On the diachronic level, then, the model of the South American lowland cosmos is like a sea of nested Chinese boxes, each smaller box replicating in a minor way the dyadic modalities of the next larger enclosing box. Therefore the system portrayed in Figure 3 of a set of related worlds represents merely a slice in time through a spiraling evolutionary trajectory of world clusters, the content and order of which could profitably be analyzed from a structuralist perspective.

Whatever its preceding states, the general outline of the current cosmos must, according to the evidence available, be a multileveled one. It is composed of at least three layers: the world of material experience-our world- in the middle, with a celestial world above and an underworld below. These three layers are recorded for a number of groups like the Apinayé (Nimuendajú 1967:140), the Pichis region Campa (Elick 1969:222), the Desana (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1971:43), and the Tapirapé (Wagley 1977:169). This triple-tiered arrangement is also the minimal construction needed to account logically for such elaborations as the 4-tiered cosmos of the Yąnomamö (Chagnon 1976:44-45), the 5-tiered world of the Waiwai (Fock 1963:101-102), the 8-tiered Makiritare universe (Arvelo-Jimenez 1971:180) and the similarly constructed River Campa cosmos (Weiss 1975:256, fig. 8) and Cuna cosmos (Stout 1947:40), the 9-tiered Kogi worlds (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1975:55), the complex 10-tiered universe of the Secoya (Ortiz Resanière 1975:54) and Campa-Nomatsiguenga (Shaver 1975:53), and, finally, the 11-tiered cosmos of the Yagua (Powlison 1977:57). That these more developed concepts are linked with the simpler triple-tiered configuration is shown by the fact that all postulate at

least one layer above and below the earth on which humans dwell, the major elaborations occurring in the sphere above the earth-the minimal arrangement needed to account elegantly for the appearance and disappearance of the sun and the moon.

The symmetry of the worlds above and below the earth also complements other kinds of symmetries in the model. For example, the souls or spirits of the dead are found *both* in the underworld(s) (Shaver 1975:50, on the Campa-Nomatsiguenga) and in the sky world (D. Moore, personal communication 1978, on the Tupi-Gavião); or there may be *two* realms of darkness, one in the lowest underworld and one, paradoxically, in the highest heaven where the sun lives (Powlison 1977:59, on the Yagua).

Summarizing this symmetry of the model is the prevailing symmetry of good and evil. However many superimposed worlds there may be, good is always associated with the upper levels and increases as one goes higher, whereas evil is always linked with the lower realms and increases as one goes downward.[1] Thus the benevolent but otiose supernatural of the Makiritare, *Wanadi*, occupies the highest heaven in their cosmology while they believe that "the realm of the malevolent expression of the supernatural, *Cajushawa*, is on the lowest plane of the universe" (Arvelo-Jimenez 1971:176). The same holds true for the Campa-Nomatsiguenga cosmos, where the upper levels are generally more favored than the lower ones and where the spirits have plenty of *piari* ("manioc beer") and spend their time in a perpetual fiesta. Indeed it is an evil fate for the souls of the dead to be caught in their ascent through the celestial layers and be thrown back to earth, or at least a lower level, by the menacing *Tsirontsiro*, thus establishing a high : low : : fortunate : unfortunate equation for Campa-Nomatsiguenga cosmology not unlike that derivable for many other groups, including the Shipibo (Shaver 1975: 49-50).

Despite the fact that this discussion shows that a single sky or multiple celestial layers above the earth are invariant, it should be structurally possible to collapse the original trinary system into a binary one by grouping the water-earth spheres with each other as one set and opposing them to the sky as the other category. This action would result in a cosmos of only two spheres. It can be done in two ways. Either the underworld becomes the under surface of the earthly plane-its bottom side-as one variant of it may be in the Ye'cuana (Makiritare) system or, as with the Tupi-Kagwahiv, it can be merged *into* the earthly plane and thus be located below its

surface. In this system, the interior of the earth itself functions as the underworld. In either case, I argue, these special instances of "no underworld" can best be decoded using the model; for even in the systems said to lack an underworld all the associations of superimposed earthly and celestial planes follow the same order as if there *were* an underworld.

Let me begin with the Kagwahiv anomaly and then proceed to the Makiritare one. The Kagwahiv myth in question is paraphrasable from many sources as follows:

The Kagwahiv had an ancient chief and *paj*é ("shaman"), *Pindova'umi'ga*, who once lived on earth, but, angered by the incessant quarreling among his children, he took his house, his best land, and all the best game and fish and lifted them all into the sky. As he did so, the central house post fell out as the house rose and turned into a cayman; a falling mortar turned into an electric eel; a fire fan into a stingray, and so forth. His sons and wives accompanied him but the rest of the Kagwahiv were left below. In looking for a place to settle, *Pindova'umi'ga* successively explored all the realms of the universe. First he tried the lower sky, but that was occupied by vultures; then the water, but that was full of fish. Then he went into the earth, but that too was occupied, by spirits. He then went inside wood, but there was honey there. Finally he tried the sky a second time and ascended to a higher level of it, above the vultures, and there he found a peaceful spot to move his house to. Only the shaman, *paj*é, can ascend the levels of the universe, and then only in trance as a part of a curing ceremony. The first group of spirits he encounters in his flight are the *añang* ("Forest Ogres"); then he finds the spirits of fish; then, of land animals and birds; and then others. Attaining the level of the Sky People, he converses with them one by one until he finally reaches and talks with their chief, *Pindova'umi'ga* himself, to ascertain the cause of his patient's illness. (Kracke 1978a: 17, 1979:125-126, 128; personal communication 1979)

Kracke then adds a structural argument based on a comparison between this myth and a Barasana myth (T. Langdon 1978) that I later refer to to argue that the Kagwahiv do not conceive of an underworld:

One particular variant of the model… may be one in which [the] bottom two levels-the earth and the underworld-evil water [region]-are collapsed, with the main focus of evil located somewhere on the earth level rather then under it. In such systems, some features of the underworld/earth's surface relationship might be transposed to the earth/sky relationship. For example, the Barasana myth in which Woman Shaman opens the

door to the *underworld* and various household implements turned into anacondas, caymans, piranhas, etc., seems to correspond to [the] Kagwahiv myth in which *Pindova'umi'ga*… lifted his house…into the sky-and the house-post fell out as the house rose and turned into a cayman [and other household implements] into a stingray, etc…. [in this first case objects welling out of the earth, in the second case falling to it from the sky]…I would suggest that this transposition implies the lack of an underworld in [Kagwahiv] mythology. None of my informants mentioned one. (personal communication 1979)

I am persuaded by this argument, but I suggest that this Kagwahiv case is a special situation produced from a transformation of the model rather then a *de novo* phenomenon, because all of the associations of the triple-tiered model still exist in this "collapsed" version. For example, note that the celestial or uppermost realm is a sphere of perfection, Plato's Cave transported to the skies, and from it fall *below* all noxious pests-caymans, electric eels, and stingrays-that are normal denizens of the subaquatic underworld and parts of its ruling Dragon. Although the identifications of thee animals may seem to have been inspired by the forms of the implements-the loglike pillar and mortar being represented by the long cayman and eel, the spreading form of the fan and fan-shaped ray-they also are all aquatic forms with evil dispositions and capable of harming man. No other elongated or fan-shaped creatures were chosen; neither were other household implements singled out.

Thus the equation, up : good things :: down : bad things still pertains even in the compressed form of the cosmos. Further, note that the first group the shaman visits is the Forest Ogres, both nocturnal and underworld (and central forest) figures. Thereafter the shaman encounters the other occupants of the subaquatic underworld, fish. Only after these two levels are reached are terrestrial animals encountered, and then finally birds and other spirit denizens of the sky. Thus the logic of the triple-tiered order of the universe is preserved even though a separate underworld has been collapsed into the earth. As the later section of the Forest Ogre shadows, evil is indeed located on the surface of the land-usually on the periphery, the center of the forest, and at night-but this represents either an upwelling of bodies of underworld water to the surface of the earth or the worlds magically reversing themselves-turning themselves inside out-during the night. In that

case the evil lurking within becomes at nightfall the evil that roams without.

The next case of "no underworld: comes from the Ye'cuana. Like the Kagwahiv case the correspondence between the total mythical data from the group and the model is quite high, so that this discussion exaggerates the differences involved. Yet for the model to hold any credibility it must be tested for anomalies, as the anomalies themselves need testing to see if they are really exemptions.

Some diagrams of the cosmos from various native lowland groups may at first sight appear not to correspond to the superimposed model. This is particularly the case when one realizes how different sketched of the cosmos can look when they are drawn from different points of view: in profile or in plane view (cf. Weiss 1975:253, fig. 7 with 256, fig. 8, the River Campa). But a close inquiry into these differing portrayals, like the curious Ye'cuana diagram Arvelo-Jimenez (1971:179, fig. 6) gives, sometimes reveals that the difficulties inherent in trying to translate a native two-dimensional perceptual graphic convention into an equally conventionalized European three-dimensional drawing (Deregowski 1972). Arvelo-Jimenez's intricate three-dimensional elevations were generated from a single informant's two-dimensional depiction (1971:218). When it is compared with an actual Makiritare drawing of their world view, which is pictured on the cover of Civrieux's (1970) book (unfortunately unlabeled), it is clear that Arvelo-Jimenez's model is one looking from the top down-that is, a model in plane view-whereas the Civrieux drawing is the model in the more familiar profile view that is closer to Makiritare graphic conventions.

The latter is much more consonant with my Figure 3, for it shows a multiple-tiered set of heaves above the earth, with the spotted Yellow Jaguar acting as an intermediary, and below, water, snakes, and fish. Although Arvelo-Jimenez denies the existence of an underworld, placing the earth itself on the lowest plane (1971:177), she does mention that the turbulent waters flow underground beneath the sky's pillars, thus establishing an aquatic underrealm (1971:179). Further, these waters are contrasted by her with the calm, eternal waters of heaven. This distinction is con-

gruent with my opposition: underworld dangerous water/celestial beneficial water.

In addition Arvelo-Jimenez reinforces this association by contrasting the evil character of the universe's lowest plane with the increasing potency of positive power of the highest planes. As mentioned above, this corresponds to the model's upper = benevolent, lower = malevolent opposition. Furthermore, she adds that the place of evil, the lower realm, is invisible; hence it is not pictured in her diagram. The key to this anomaly lies in Civrieux's remark (1970:21) that the underworld is the mirror image of the earth; literally it is the *underside* of the earth.

Other correspondences and inversions occur that relate the Makiritare cosmos to the general model. The Makiritare invert the center of my Figure 3, depicting the earth as a hollow ring fringing a central sea, whereas my diagram envisions a round island surrounded by a fringing sea. With regards to directionality, the correspondences between the Makiritare and my model are exact, the east being linked in Arvelo-Jimenez's diagram, as in mine, with the "New Sun"-literally, the sun's son, *Wanadi*, the Makiritare culture hero-and the west with the "Old Sun," his father.

Thus even in systems with only two spheres (an earth and a celestial level), it is usually possible to pick up references to "underground water," which hints at the presence of yet another aqueous world beneath the earth. Therefore the two-sphere model is but a "weak variant" of the "strong" three-leveled system.

Each one of these three levels is conceived to approximate the landscape of the "real" world. They are flat, round platters with local topography on the upper side (Chagnon 1976:27, on the Yąnamamö). Of all the realms the earth is the most elaborated. It is like an island, either surrounded by water (Ortiz Resanière 1975:55, on the Secoya) or punctuated by deep springs or pools. Both bodies of water are doors to the underworld (Varese 1968:125-35, on the Pajonal Campa).

With regard to the first possibility, Figure 3 shows a flat circular saucer-shaped world with water surrounding it in which lies a giant boa. Though this figure was first drawn with the Shipibo in mind, the following quote from the Warao well illustrates this possibility:

> According to the Warao concept of the universe, the earth is saucer-shaped with a flat surface, and mankind-more specifically the Warao themselves-lives in its center. The earth is surrounded by water that

reaches to the horizon and to the very ends of the world. Submerged in the ocean and encircling the earth is the Snake of Being, a sea monster that adopts an *uroboros* position, with its featureless extreme ends approaching each other east of the earth. (Wilbert 1975a: 164)

In the second possibility, discrete versus continuous peripheral water, the waters of the world join and flow to a hole, or can be in the east (Weiss 1975:251, 253, on the River Campa) or in the other three quadrants, particularly the west, where the holes are associated with the waters of the dead. Actually one can construct a system whereby the waters flow in a huge three-dimensional circuit around the earth-platter, entering and flowing through the underworld and through the heavens as well before they return to the earth to start the circuit all over again. The Machiguenga picture of the underworld contains such a subterranean river. There the underworld has dense forests just like those on earth, but without fruit or edible game. Running through it is the river of death. The river is not good to drink and contains no fish (Weiss 1975:257). This underworld is a cold, dark, and wet place.[2] It is inhabited by spirits of the dead and malicious dwarfs (Whitten 1976:45, on the Canelos Quichua; Wilbert 1974:8, on the Yupa) who lived in a reversed world, a world of mirrors.

Related as they are to highland Quechua underworld dwarfs (Núñez del Prado 1974:239), the Canelos Quichua underground midget's world

is also divided into day, *puncha*, and night, *tuta*, but the times are reversed, for where there is night on earth, *Indi* (sun) is bringing yellow warmth to the underworld, and when it is day n the earth the stars, and often the moon, are bringing their night sun to the underworld. Directions, too, are reversed in the underworld. Again, *Quilla* (moon) is anomalous, for he may be above the earth during the day, and also underworld during the day. (1974:45)

If mirrors exist in the underworld, then the dualism of the model postulates that they must also exist in the heavens. The dark mirrors of the underworld are complemented by the shining mirrors of the sun, which reflect its light to earth from the highest heaven (Weiss 1975:271, on the River Campa).

Completing the circuit of the rivers of the world are the celestial rivers. They are the mirror images of the underworld rivers. Instead of being devoid of fish, they teem with fish; instead of being

the rivers of death, they are the rivers of life, of rebirth, of eternal youth (Weiss 1975:254). Some, like the Machiguenga, link the river of eternal youth in the sky, where one changes one's skin, with the Milky Way, which flows like a river through the night sky; but that is an inverted association, for the Milky Way is really the celestial analogue of the subterranean river of death, and via death, of rebirth as well.

The rivers like the girdle of a gyro, double rings at right angles to each other containing the superimposed worlds within their swirling fields of force. If the celestial worlds are a bit undefined and if the underworld is a mirror image of the earth, then to discover more about the phenomenological terrestrial landscape it is necessary to see how it is anchored in this aquatic matrix-to look at the World Tree.

The World Tree

The House Pillar Tree, Masculine Armature of a Feminine Hut

In the center of the human world stands the *maloca* ("communal house"). Its central post is an *axis mundi* (Dumont 1976:77, on the Panare; Whitten 1976:67, on the Canelos Quichua). Perhaps the best model for the human geography of the surface of the world-platter would be a series of concentric rings, beginning with that central house pillar; moving out to the walls of the hut itself; and then beyond, to the cleared plaza, a testament to the power of collective human labor to keep the ever-encroaching jungle at bay; then to the house garden and its familiar useful plants; and finally to the bordering lake, river, or stream, where the spirits begin; or in the opposite direction, toward the interior of the dark tropical forest where other spirits dwell.

Having located the *maloca* in the center of the concentric rings of a terrestrial universe, its symbolic associations should be examined more closely. The communal hut is a complex symbol.

As a container-like others such as the gourd, pot or basket-it is a womb symbol, the "uterus" of the social group, while on its door is a kind of vagina (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1975:148, on the Tukano). The Warao have an accurate perception of the human abode:

The Warao have an anthropocentric world view. They conceive of themselves as living in the center of the terrestrial disc and at the foot of the world axis that connects the earth with the zenith and cosmic vault. Thus when a Warao baby emerges from the womb of his squatting mother, he falls right into the heart of the universe. (Wilbert 1975a: 163)

Because the *maloca* is a central place it is associated with the central part of the female body the belly (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1975:141, on the Tukano). This anticipated my finding that the World Tree, which sits in the very center of this central place, has a trunk (belly) pregnant with fish, just as the first mythical Fish Woman has. Thus the house pillar of the *maloca* is simultaneously a symbol of the World Tree out of which it is metaphorically carved. The Makiritare, for example, liken the central house post to the connection between heaven and earth, a center that is filled with water (Arvelo-Jimenez 1971:179, 184, fig. 11).

The House Pillar Tree is also a phallic entity via its masculine-associated long dance staff. This stick-rattle, like the World Tree it represents connects the three levels of the universe; yet it is solid not hollow. All of its attributes are masculine in contrast to the feminine, hollow attributes of the World Tree. The top of the staff is decorated with feathers of a male-associated bird, the hummingbird. It is related to the jaguar, in his yellow guise a quintessentially masculine animal, and to the sun, the masculine symbol par excellence.

When the dance staff is plunged into the feminine earth, it becomes like a digging stick in its metaphorical restatement of the fertilizing sexual act. Drops of semen flow down the stick to fertilize the earth. Later, up the stick crawl the result of fertilization: human progeny. They come from the watery depths and flow upward (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1975:140, on the Tukano) just like the souls of the dead, which rise up the World Tree through its roots, which penetrate the underworld by a kind of capillary action (Lévi-Strauss 1973:114, on the Mocovi).

In short, the *maloca* itself is a microcosm of sex that replicates

the macrocosmic egg of which it is a part. Its central armature, the House Pillar Tree = Phallic Staff, copulates with the round shell of the roof that encloses it. Thus it is the beginning of life, the central shaft hard and solid, whereas the leafy exterior wall is soft and hollow. But at the end of life the central pillar turns into a hollow trunk. It rots, and water is found in its soft interior at the same time that, paradoxically, its solid branches above give new life through their dangling fruits. The Tukano symbolize this essentially ambiguous figure by seeing in their drug-induced hallucinations the house pillars covered with undulating snakes (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1975:171), an ambisexual figure.

As a cultural world-and therefore close as well to the supernatural world (Dumont 1976:87, on the Panare), of which it is a tangible representation (Arvelo-Jimenez 1971:82, on the Makiritare)-the communal hut is surrounded by a cleared plaza. This plaza and the house it contains constitute the central sphere of the ethnic unit: civilization and light. Beyond it extends the peripheral green wall of the jungle, the home of darkness, wild animals, animalistic human ogres, and dangerous foreigners (Arvelo-Jimenez 1971:183). This is also the Shipibo conception, and it explains their reluctance to leave the hut at night.

The central house pillar metonymically symbolizes the trunk of the central World Tree, which united the three worlds as an armature and as a passage way. Not only do the souls of the dead and infants to be born percolate up through it; it is also the ladder the sun used when he was first in human form and needed to escape his earthly wife and assume his position in the heavens (Barral 1960:62-66, on the Warao). It is easy to assimilate the ladderlike branches of the World Tree to the ladder made of arrows described earlier. The masculine arrows align with the masculine dance staff to complement the feminine World Tree.

The World Tree as House Pillar Tree also has ties with that other connecting symbol, the mountain. Mountains are hollow like the World Tree; they have caves that communicate with the lower aqueous realms. The Kogi make this transitive association when they refer to a hut as a cave, and a cave as a womb (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1978a:10). The Warao synthesize these two metaphors-hollow wooden tree and hollow stone mountain-when they refer to the gigantic central *petrified wood* tree trunk that helps hold up the world and that descends to the underworld. By its side there is an entrance to a cave that leads into the mountain.

The rapidly opening and shutting doors of the cave stand for the devouring vagina-jaws of the dangerous subterranean serpent that lives within the mountain and swallows the unlucky souls of those who fail to clear the gate, reducing them to bones (Wilbert 1975a:171). This establishes a mountain = serpent equation congruent with both the World Tree = serpent association and the World Tree - mountain linkage. The World Tree supports the sky (Nimuendajú 1967:181, on the Apinayé),[3] and its role is repeated at the cardinal points by other world pillars: "At the cardinal and intercardinal points of the universe, there are world mountains that are believed to be gigantic petrified trees" (Wilbert 1975a:165).

The Food Tree Has Many Breasts

The trunk of the World Tree emerges from the underworld and passes through the earth of living men. Its leafy crown pushes into the firmament (Wistrand-Robinson 1975, on the Panoan), just as the forest giants of the triple-tiered tropical forest shoulder their way up through the highest canopy into the sun. There in the celestial realm, as the Shipibo version has it, the branches of the World Tree are associated with fruits and birds. In the Shipibo myth this great tree plays a central role in creation as it mediates forest giant, *Niwëru*, grew at the sacred site of Cumancayacocha. Readers will remember that this site is an oxbow lake of the upper Ucayali. It contains the Late Prehistoric site of Cumancaya, UCA-22, one component of which, the Cumancaya Complex, has clear affinities with modern Panoan populations like the Shipibo. It is identified by them as being the location of the first Shipibo village. Again we see that the origin of the group is inextricably linked with the central place or origin of the universe.

***N iw ë ru*, the Cumancaya Myth** (*Paraphrased*)

When the sun first emerged, its rays hit the branches of the tree hanging heavy with fruit. The fruit dropped into the lake like rain. Fish, attracted to the surface by the sound of their splashing impact, began to eat the bobbing fruit. As the fish took bites out of them there emerged all the species of birds there are in the world. The leaves of the tree were later used by a woman shaman to prepare flight medicine that levitated the

entire site off the ground and sent it flying off through the air to the accompaniment of drums and flutes until it eventually descended to earth again on a mountain downriver at Canshahuaya (Canchayuaya). [4]

In this myth the Shipibo World Tree is clearly a variant of the widespread South Amerindian concept of the Food Tree, as the following quotation from Butt-Colson's study of Akawaio belief indicates:

At Chinawieng village, during the course of a séance, Joe brought down a minor mountain spirit, *Baidotma*, who said that there was one large tobacco tree on Karowrieng Mountain and that its seeds drop below the cliffs and make small bushes. It is said that this one large tobacco tree had *kumeli* tobacco growing on one side and *abasarawa* on the other. (The idea of the propagation of fruits and vegetables from one large tree seems to have a fascination for Akawaio, and it is frequently found in their myths of origins of vegetable products.) (1977:53)

Here we have another association of the Food Tree with mountains (a case of mythical redundancy given the World Tree- mountain equation already established), but one that gives a special fecundity to the World Tree itself. The best summation of the maternal and sustenance-giving aspects of the Food Tree is the Piaroa myth in which, after causing the flood, the huge tree suckles babies from its myriad breasts to repopulate the world (Wilbert 1966:66-71).[5]

A parallel exists between this Food Tree-the origin of birds and suckler of humans-and *Aunkeke*, the Cubeo Food Tree. In addition to having all the alimentary plants such as plantains hanging from its branches, *Aunkeke* is also festooned with the hides of all animals an people who wait anxiously below for their coverings so they can assume their respective natures (Soto Holguín 1971-1972:61, on the Cubeo). Thus the Food Tree gives all life: vegetable, animal, and human. It is not only the source of provisions and living beings; it is also the source of the technological means to those provisions. The Yagua believe that groundstone axes, which are used for cutting ordinary trees for agricultural purposes, fell as thunderstones from the World Tree (Powlison 1977:40). This food- and implement-bearing Tree of Life is one of the "key symbols" (Ortner 1973) of the entire cosmological system. It condenses within its semantic field most of the subsidiary symbols, such as the tapir, the anaconda, birds and women, that also appear as separate characters with the model. Indeed the next sev-

eral sections deal with the various permutations of this protean symbol.

Thanks to the work of Lévi-Strauss (1973:394) and Helms (1977:64) there is little doubt about the botanical identification of this tree. It is a member of the silk-cotton tree or bombax family (*Bombaceae ap.*), which includes the yuchan (*Chorisia insignia*) and the ceiba (*Bombaceae ceiba*) as well as the closely related *Tiliaceae* family. It is an "anomalous" (Alland 1977: 74; Douglas 1966:169, 173) tree because its trunk is bulbous, rather then straight, and hollow rather then solid. Moreover it is soft, rather than hard, and light in weight, rather then heavy, the normal characteristics of trees. It is also significant that it bears water in its interior. The whole tree is like some sort of curious fruit with its aqueous interior and bulbous shape. Thus other fruit trees that bear globular fruit like the genipa tree (*Genipa americana*), can act as a substitute for the mighty ceiba or similar tree either in regions where it is not found or where the special black associations of the genipa's juices can be employed in myth to refer to the aquatic underworld nature of the tree, as in the Shipibo myths.

The liminal character of the silk-cotton and morphology related trees makes them the perfect vehicles for myth. The engorges trunk occupies, as V. Turner (1973:1100) would say, the "sensory" pole of this natural symbol's meaning, standing by way of manifest analogy for a pregnant woman's swollen belly, as do the "little wombs" of the fruits of the related fruit trees. Indeed, with the polysemy of symbols, the fruits themselves can also stand for the multiple pendant breasts of the Food Tree.

Moreover Helms (1977L64) notes that many of these trees bear long, sharp, and wicked spines or thorns on their trunks. Wilbert (1975a: 171, on the Warao) states that the thorns of the World Tree are juxtaposed with leaves. The *right* side of the enormous petrified tree is covered with leaves while the *left* side is covered with thorns. This vertical division corresponds with the general lowland associations of left = negative and right = positive, which are then related to female and male, respectively. Why are the spines, or thorns important? I suggest that the sharp spines on the World Tree are analogous of the sharp teeth in the *vagina dentata* of the Fish Woman, who is herself a transformation of the Wooden Bride = World Tree = Dragon Tree (Figure 4). Whether on the exterior (when the tree has an internal human spirit) or on the interior (when the tree has an external human form), they serve as warn-

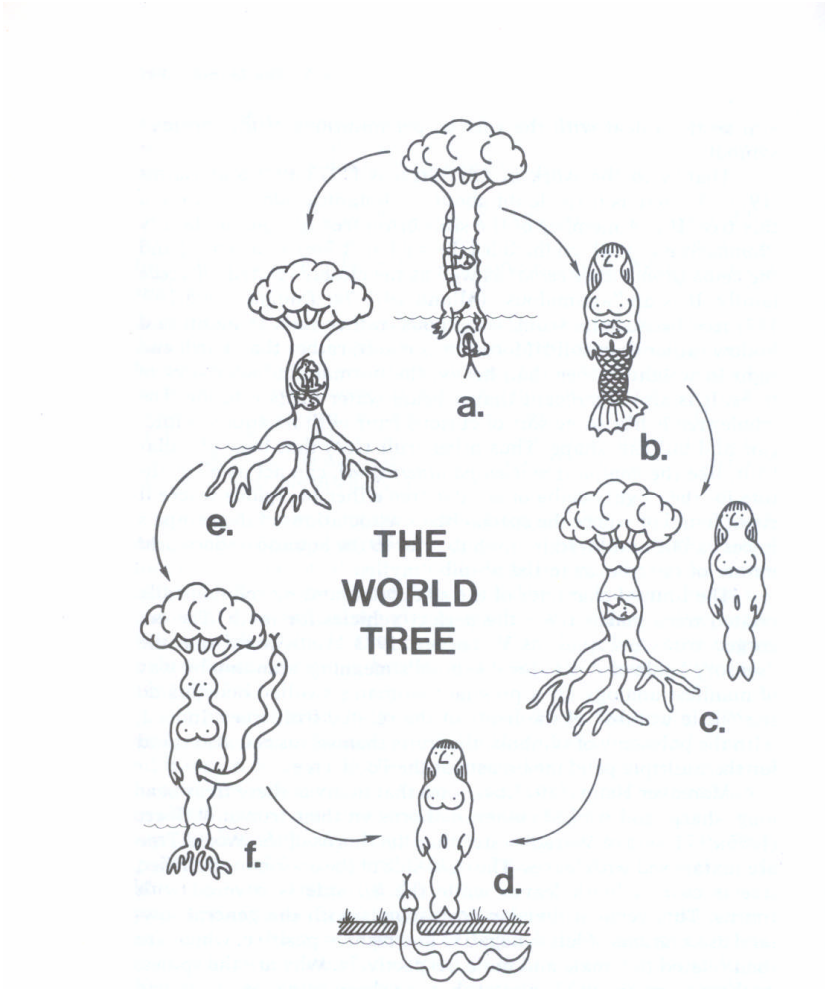


Figure 4. Permutations of the World Tree as Key Symbol: (a) Dragon Tree, (b) Fish woman, (c) Phallic World Tree with Woman Shaman Guardian, (d) First Woman and the Ambulatory Phallus, (e) Botanical Tree with the Dragon (Frog Variant) on the Inside, and (f) Woman Tree, Alias the Wooden Bride.

ings to the destructive male agents who threaten the tree with destruction in their creative quest for the caviling gifts of cultigens and fire. These the tree holds but will not transfer to mankind.

From bottom to top, the World Tree is a symbolic continuum incorporating both male and female aspects, life and death, in a single concrete object. The roots themselves are filth, strings of mucus, ridden with vermin, which penetrate beneath the earth and enter the pathogenic waters of the subaquatic underworld, it is interesting that there is a further connection between the World Tree and the Milky Way, which has equally pathogenic aspects, although it is a celestial phenomenon. Lévi-Strauss (1973:134) points out that the Mocovi and the Bororo believe the Milky Way to be the ashes of the Tree of the World after it had been burned down.

If the worlds reverse themselves at nightfall, then so too do the parts of the World Tree; its branches become its roots, and its roots, branches. The verminous roots, therefore, now spread as branches against the dark orb of the night sky and there connect with the flowing river of sickness, the Milky Way, which is itself the leaking product of the World Tree's upended trunk. This part of the argument is deduces from the properties of the model and thus stands as a prediction rather than something that has already emerged from the data. Yet it forms both a useful hypothesis against which to compare available data and guide in the search for new information. There is already a hint of confirmation, albeit indirect, in a Warao association. These data link the Milky Way with a name meaning "where the tapir splashes in the water" (Armellada and Napolitano 1975:43). Because the tapir is the guardian of the World Tree, especially of the water inside its bulbous trunk and the seeds within its bulbous fruit, this association identifies the water of the World Tree with the water of the Milky Way, which is elsewhere described as a flowing river. The tapir is also a manifestation of the Dragon, inhabitant of the subaquatic underworld.

This latter malevolent creature, Master of Fish and Fish Women, must be killed, fulfilling the dictates of structuralist logic, by a liminal drab-colored bird intermediary, a diver, before it can be hauled onto dry land to be cut to pieces and, with its blood, furnish the color for the gaudily plumaged, flying, male-associated

birds that perch on the upper, cleansed branches of the World Tree (Figure 5).

To continue to summarize the consequences of the World Tree, the tapir guardian of the trunk (Lévi-Strauss 1969:184, on the Mataco and Ashluslay), as the terrestrial combinatorial variant of the anaconda-Dragon (E.J. Langdon 1978, on the Siona), is a phallic-uterine symbol. This association is turn reinforces the alternate guise of this tree with water and fish inside it, the huge boa with fish in its belly (Lévi-Strauss 1963) of the Shipibo myths. The symbolic associations of the World Tree continue to ramify like its spreading branches, for when the tree is cut down, a torrential flood pours out from the severed trunk to inundate the world (Civrieux 1970:122, on the Makiritare), bringing death to innocent animals and offending humans alike (Lévi-Strauss 1969:184, on the Mataco and the Ashluslay). This, too, reintegrated with other meaning because excessive and therefore dangerous water is the hallmark of the anaconda-caymanic Dragon, of which this tree is just another guise.

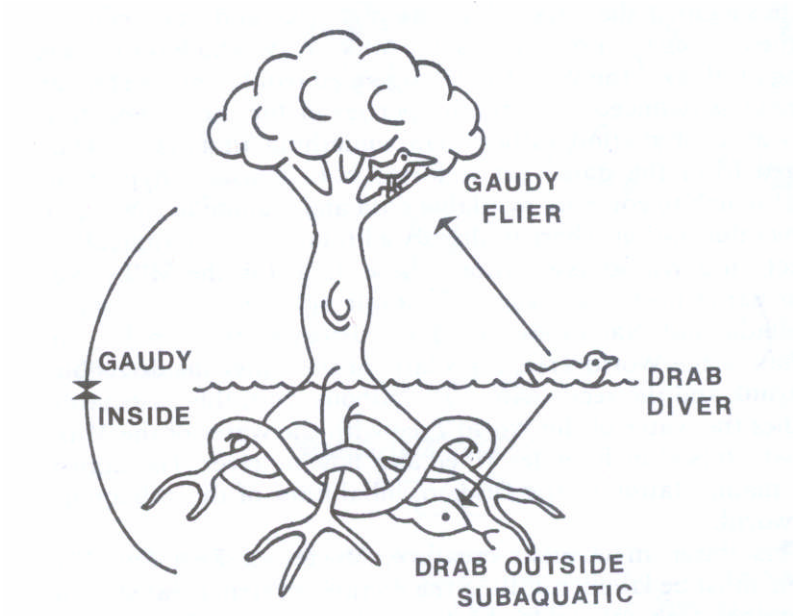


Figure 5. Birds and Bathing in the Blood of the Anaconda

These waters are associated with the base of the trunk of the World Tree. Thus in a Carib myth from the former British Guiana area, a typical Food Tree that carries all the edible fruits on its branches harbors a spring at its base. The spring is capped by a stone in some versions or a basket in others. When the basket is removes a great flood occurs and fish appear (Brett 1868:106, 127). This Carib myth with the basket as a container-and containers are wombs-articulates with the Cuna belief that hollow whirlpools are wombs associated with the World Tree. In Cuna belief, as elsewhere, floods issue from the World Tree when it is cut down. What makes the Cuna World Tree interesting, however, is that four whirlpools swirl at its base. Because whirlpools are associated with the subaquatic abodes of evil spirits (Nordenskiöld 1938:495)-as are the roots of the World Tree itself-and are metaphors for the wombs of women, or the womb of the earth goddess (Helms 1977:88), the appearance of the Cuna whirlpools reaffirms the womb character of the World Tree's trunk. The World Tree not only carries little wombs above in its fruits; it also has small wombs below in the whirlpools that guard its evil base.

Given these aquatic associations of the World Tree and its role as the origin of the world flood, it is not surprising that the felled World Tree should also be associated with rivers. Just as readers will see that the major meandering rivers of the jungle originated from the primordial serpent, and the serpent is related to the World Tree, so do the Yagua have the World Tree, cut down for its internal water, form the Amazon and its branches, the network of tributaries (Powlison 1971-1972:76).

Although the World Tree may give life in the form of fruits, it also deals with death when severed by producing the world flood. That is not the only aspect in which the primordial tree provides mortality. Because the wood of the World Tree is soft, and softness is related to femininity and rot, it also seduces mankind into dying. In an Apinayé version of the macaw-nester myth, hard trees (i.e., masculine trees, Carneiro 1978, on the Kuikuru) insure immortality, but the gentle call of the rotten tree produces mortality despite a benevolent jaguar's warning (Nimuendajú 1967:156).

Because the World Tree is also a symbol of life, the inverse of this Apinayé association holds for the Urubu myth in which a similarly foolish human ignores the call of a tree that is immortal because it periodically sheds its bark. Thus mankind lost the op-

portunity to shed its skin and become immortal (Huxley 1956:92-93). The shedding of the World Tree's bark links it wit the Dragon Tree, which represents the analogous reptilian ability to achieve immortality by sloughing off its skin.

The Gourd as Tree Fruit Is a Mother by Proxy

Not only can the Botanical Tree as Food Tree give birth in its aquatic womb to fish and floods; the bulbous fruit that hang from its branches, like the bottle gourd (*Lagenaria siceraria*), can give birth to creatures and men. Such myths as the Shipibo one about Cumancaya show us another aspect of the model's redundancy, for just as the tree itself is a large womb, so too are the many fruits its bears miniature wombs (Lathrap 1977:719). The basis for the analogy is the same in both cases: a round plant form relates to the protruding stomach of a pregnant woman.

The most obvious use for these little, independent, and portable wombs is a wife surrogate. Lathrap, following Reichel-Dolmatoff, establishes the gourd as a sexual object in the religious life of the Kogi that

is activated in times of economic hardship. During thee periods of stress the men spend most of their time in the sacred hours [the female womb] chanting along with the religious leaders. At such times consumption of coca with lime increases tremendously, and the men are constantly fiddling with their lime containers, repeatedly sticking the spatula in and out. The lime container is, of course, a bottle gourd and the manipulation of the gourd and spatula is a conscious metaphor for copulation and a statement of sexual tension during periods of almost complete segregation of men and women. (1977:718)

Here again is the image of the nesting Chinese boxes. The female hut is a womb for the Kogi, and the central pillar of the hut is the phallus penetrating it. Inside the hut the same symbolism holds for the microcosm of the lime gourd and its armature, the spatula.

Barasana and Taiwano Indians of the Vaupés (T. Langdon 1978(make this sexual linkage of the gourd even more explicit by presenting the second step in its ultimate transformation into a woman. In their myth the gourd cup is an intermediary vehicle in the impregnation of a real female. Two heroic twins ejaculate into the fruit of Woman Shaman, a personified, hollow, water and fish-filled tree, and thus both a variant of the Wooden Bride and

the Fish Woman figures. The fruits that originally formed the cup had hung from her limbs. The twins serve the semen drink to Woman Shaman and thereby cause her to become pregnant. In this myth the gourd cup is just the intermediary vehicle to transport the sperm into the woman's body in an act of artificial oral insemination. In this act the sex = consumption of food or drink (eating) equation of the model is directly shown.

Shipibo myth 8 carries us one step farther, for there the gourd serves both as the vagina substitute of the Barasana-Taiwano gourd and as the womb substitute of the woman herself. In the Shipibo myth a bachelor lets his mother perform the wifely duties of the household drudge while he uses the watermelonlike *shopan* fruit for copulation. Following the common South Amerindian notion of physiological reproduction, his semen accumulates inside the fruit and forms the Miraculous Twins (which elsewhere are the sun and moon). They are born when the fed-up mother dashes the fruit to the ground and it splits open. Thereupon the old woman fulfills the not entirely successful role of substitute mother for an inquiring and precocious set of twins. Here the woman only plays an intermediary role in the birth of the children, thus reversing the respective roles of the woman and the gourd of the previous myth. The real mother of the Shipibo myth is the *shopan*.

The Carib-speaking Akawaio of Guyana have a very similar myth that takes this process of transformation one step farther. The gourd actually becomes a woman rather then merely functioning like one:

A long time ago people lived here and fought among themselves until only one man was left alive. He had no wife and to remedy this he took a drinking gourd (*pötsaw*) and copulated with it, so making a woman of the gourd. With her he peopled the entire place. The people were called *Pötsaugok* the drinking cup people… They make gurgling noises, like people drinking out of a *pötsaw*, because they originated in a drinking gourd. (Butt-Colson 1973:42)

These three myths provide the progression: gourd as vagina → gourd as womb → gourd as woman, and establish the feminine fecundity aspects of the fruit of the World Tree. In addition to being bulbous, "pregnant" in form, they are also hollow. They can be scraped out to form containers that hold the same water that is held in the larger container of the World Tree's trunk. This association in turn raises the association of hollow foods, and eating, to the things woman "devour" from the World Tree.

"Hollow" foods, like honey, are linked with females because the beehives in the hollow trees have circular entrances said to be identical in shape to a woman's vagina (Arcand 1974, on the Cuiva). This association is, of course, doubly redundant inasmuch as the hollow trunk itself is a symbol of a woman's womb. The equation, eating = sex, raises the level to triple redundancy, while a quadruple level is attained when it is remembered from Lévi-Strauss's analysis that the Girl Mad about Honey (1973:117) voraciously devours honey and thus exhibits shameless, unconstrained, and uncivilized connotations. The symbol is reinforced, then, twice on the level of anatomy and twice on the level of behavior lest anyone miss the intended message. The circle of meaning loops back on itself when it is observed that woman at their most "natural," during menstruation, are forbidden to eat honey (Arcand 1974:2). Menstruation being the time when women are most likely to "devour" honey, this prohibition keeps them from completely reverting to their prehuman state.

Gourds are not the only bulbous things hanging on the Tree of Life. Insect nests have the same form, while happily bringing up yet another aspect of the dangerous nature of a woman's sex: the noxious hordes of biting insects lodged within them that can issue forth in a flood of flying fury reminiscent of the flood that spews from the severed trunk of the World Tree. In parallel with the womb symbolism of the Shipibo *nacash* ("termite nest"), the bulbous form of insect nests hanging on a tree forms an analogue of the pregnant woman's belly. As one Kagwahiv informant put it, "One sees some pregnant woman because the nest of *urucu* bees is big-bellied (*buchudo*)… It is a young child. The nest has the children [larvae] inside, its children. You sleep and dream of honey, there will be [or: you will have] many children of others" (Kracke 1979:150).

This association also operates on the level of native physiological theory. As the Kagwahiv say, "To dream of a bee's nest or of pieces of a bee's nest with honey and larvae in it may refer to pregnancy" (Kracke 1979:131). This image closely corresponds to Kagwahiv concepts of gestation in which the fetus is nourished in the womb by the semen of repeated intercourse. The reverse association, "If one dreams of a pregnant woman, it means one will find honey" (1979:131) is also true.

Another part of this spreading set of metaphor links (Figure 6) is the role of bees as stinging, noxious pests, associated in Shipibo

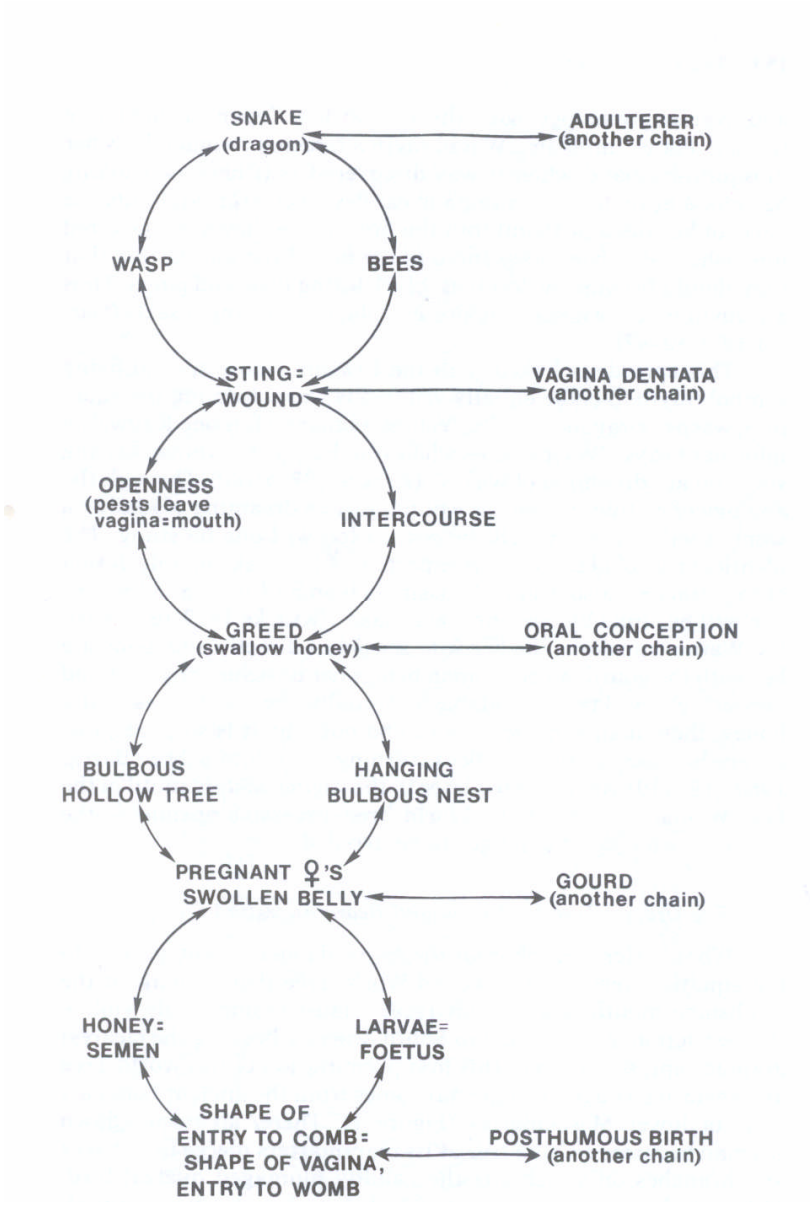


Figure 6. Metaphorical Chain: Honey = Bees = Wound = Vagina

and Warao mythology with the unguarded "open" behavior of women. For example in a Warao myth a ferocious woman kills her mosquito-husband when it was discovered he was drinking her blood at night. The woman is careless, however, and puts the parts of her dead husband into the fire, where they are converted into ashes. She then blows them to the four directions saying that they should become mosquitoes, black biting flies, and gnats. Thus a woman is the origin of the present plague of biting insects (Garcia 1971:40-42).

This episode is linked with the Dragon, whose special flying symbol (myth 5) is the equally venomous wasp, forming the equation, wasps : Dragon : : birds : Yellow Jaguar.[6] Thus one Kagwahiv informant says, "Wasps, too-when you dream of a woman kissing you, you are dreaming of wasps" (Kracke 1978a:180). Through the analogy of a sting to a cut or wound, just as dreaming of kissing a woman will mean one will be cut, so too will one be stung. The identical role of bees-and, as expected, of the snake manifestation of the Dragon-also occurs. "Kissing a woman [in dreams] means one will be stung by bees, or see a snake" (Kracke 1979:131). Last the Warao transform the bee into a woman directly and associate her with the gourd. A bee-woman brings her unsuspecting husband "water" every day in a calabash. Actually the "water" is really honey, then unknown. He tries to find out why it is so sweet, discovers her secret, and she flees, turning back into a bee (Barral 1960:118-119). As reiterated later in the *vagina dentata* motif of the Fish Woman variant of the World Tree, excessive openness-the vagina = wound-is a danger to be avoided.

The Dragon Tree Is Hollow and Bears Ancestors

What better metaphor for the spiny, dangerous entryway into the aquatic interior of the fecund World Tree than to make it the toothsome mouth of a Dragon Tree? I must momentarily violate the restriction of this model to South America because the clearest graphic representation of this first permutation of the World Tree as Vegetative Dragon (Figure 4a) comes from the ancient Izapa art style of lower Mesoamerica (Figure 7). There, an upside-down cayman becomes a Ceiba tree as its rear quarters merge into leaves and branches on which sits the gaudily plumaged quetzal bird. Although there is evidence from South American lowland mythology that confirms this iconographic interpretation-specifically in



Figure 7. Izapa Cayman Tree, Stela 25 (Bander 1972:39, fig. 26)

the alternate description of the cayman and the anaconda as huge hollow, dugout wooden canoes that, like the Tree of Life out of which they were fashioned, bear cultigens to mankind (Riviére 1969b:260, on the Trio)-there is no representation as clear as the Izapa stela. This manifestation of the World Tree is hollow and bears the Dragon on the *outside.* The initial step in relating the cayman with the World Tree comes via the reptilian Tree of Life's ability to shed it's bark. In Cuna mythology the bark of the World Tree becomes the first cayman and iguanas (Helms 1977:64). The next step shows the Wooden Cayman with fish in its body is also symbolized by the Wooden Anaconda, also with fish in its belly. The fact that the Wooden Anaconda is really the World Tree is further strengthened by the Barasana depiction of the anaconda as a subaquatic log with fish inside (Hugh-Jones 1974:272). A more direct association comes from the fact that the wooden canoes that are hung on the Pemón World Tree, *Wadakapiapué*, converted into snakes when they fell as the tree was chopped down (Armellada and Napolitano 1975:259). Because the cayman and anacondas are assimilated symbolically into each other, Shipibo myth 8, as well as the closely related Canelos-Quichua myth (Whitten 1976:55), sees the cayman as a gigantic canoe carrying culture heroes.

The same role is allotted to the Desana anaconda-canoe, which swims upriver, bearing the ancestors. It is also a form of the "snake with fish inside its body," a function also of the World Tree (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1971: 26). Just as the ancestors passed through the hollow body of the World Tree, so too did they travel within the hollow shell of the Dragon Tree Canoe.

The Frog inside the Botanical Tree Is Wrinkled and Vomits Fire

The next crucial transformation of the World Tree is still hollow but carries the Dragon, now in one of its minor incarnations, on the *inside*. That minor variant of the Dragon is the tree frog, and it dwells within the water inside the Botanical World Tree (Figure 4e). The tree is now completely naturalistic in appearance, and it contains both water and fish. The toad or tree frog, combinatorial variant of the Dragon (Lévi-Strauss 1973:250), dweller in the aquatic world inside the hollow World Tree (1973:172, on the Warao) and its defender against destruction (Lévi-Strauss 1969:101, on the Cariri), also carries a powerful poison. This association comes from

the hunting poisons developed out of the secretions of certain small tree frogs. Thus to the poison of the bees, wasps, and spiders who emanate from the World Tree might also be added the poison of the frog. This frog is really an old woman. Like the Wooden Bride and the Fish Woman she has a *vagina dentata* (Carneiro 1964:10 on the Amahuac). She is the instructor of fish poison to women (Lévi-Strauss 1969:260, on the Mundurucú). The frog defends the tree against its destruction by fire (1969:71, on the E. Timbira), which it extinguished by spitting it out.

Alternatively, the frog may "devour" the fire (Weiss 1975: 356), an excessive sexual act associated with females. This act also produces the frog's ugly skin through the logic of excessive sex = death and haggard appearance. Or, hot peppers may take the place of a fire. In a Tucuma myth a Frog Woman reverts to her zoomorphic self and runs to the water, abandoning her humanoid children in the process, when her mouth is burnt by the pepper she has eaten (Lévi-Strauss 1978:25).

The Kogi make the appropriate change of sex and explicitly identify the toad with females and sex:

Among the Kogi Indians the word for toad (*maukúi*) is a common epithet for the female sex organ, and a number of mythological toads are associated with diseases and other dangers. In Kogi mythology the toad was an adulterous woman who was punished by her husband, the Sun; since then all toads have been represented symbolically the female sex in an adulterous and aggressive sense. (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1972c: 109).

The Tukanoan tribes of the same region also depict the toad as a devourer of masculine entities, a dweller of the night (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1972c: 110). The frog-toad is swollen of black, ugly and wrinkled skin, just like the cayman. Yet, like the World Tree that harbors her, the frog is tenacious of life (Karsten 1964: 104, on the Canelos) and may help the World Tree rejuvenate itself (Stout 1947: 41, on the Cuna).

The frog being a minor variant of the Dragon, its primary associations in the myths are with evil aquatic underworld of feminine and ogreish connotations. In River Campa thought, for example, the species masters of several species of frogs and toads are viewed as huge demons (Weiss 1975: 290). Furthermore the frog, like other ogres, receives his identity as a kind of punishment for improper behavior. The Campa man tries to kill others searching for him by crushing their skulls and is transformed into one

species of zoomorphic frog as a punishment (1975:344-345).[7] The Yagua frog ogre *Watachare* performs the cayman role (myth 7) of cutting off the leg of the foolish younger brother (i.e., the moon) of the Magical Twins. It is appropriate that the ogre throws the severed limb into the water, where it becomes an actual cayman (Powlison1971-1972: 80). The frog is linked to the Forest Ogre in Hetá thought, where the evil-smelling spirits of the dead are modeled "in *black* beeswax, primarily to illustrate these frightening spirits to the children. A *möu* was usually depicted as a squatting frog with a capybara-like head" (Kozák et al. 1979: 418, emphasis mine).

The major mythical function of the frog within the model is as a caymanic Dragon substitute who withholds fire from man. The frog is intimately connected with the widespread twins cycle, wherein the wife of the sun, made pregnant by him, sets off on a journey to find him. The Magical Twins she carried in her belly, being precocious, guide her until she is stung by a wasp in the belly (the wasp being an agent of the Dragon). She strikes at it but the twins interpret the blow as a rebuke, get angry and refuse to advise her further. She, being a woman and therefore foolish and mortal, takes the wrong fork in the path and ends up in the house of an old (Black) Jaguar and her son. The human wife is killed by either the mother or the son (usually the mother). She is ripped open and yields the twins, who are raised by the old woman as her adopted children. The twins grow rapidly, learn of their real mother's death, and avenge themselves on their foster mother, stealing fire from her in the process and, as cultural heroes, transfer it to mankind.

In that generalized story line many transpositions of characters and events can occur, but they take place according to the logic of the system. The most important of these substitutions is when the Old Frog Woman replaces the Old (Black) Jaguar Woman and acts out her villainous role. Where the frog replicates the "devouring" function of the cayman aspect of the Dragon, it is portrayed as being female. On the other hand when it duplicates the phallic associations of the anaconda component of the Dragon, it is male. Thus the Yąnamamö already have a cayman fulfilling the first role, they use the frog as the latter function for one of the few cases where the frog is male. In their myth the frog is a large, fat man who jealously guards fire in his throat just as the female frog will do in hers. When he is finally defeated by one of the

twins, who give fire to man, he jumps into the water and is converted to a slimy worm (Armellada and Napolitano 1975: 204), an anaconda analogue.

Generally, however, the cayman function of the Dragon is stressed and the frog is identified as an old female. For example an Old Frog Woman of a Warao myth leads the pregnant human wife of the sun astray at the inevitable bifurcation of the paths, and causes her death. She opens her stomach and raises the twins she finds therein as her own. Se hides fire in her body until one day they cut a bunch of fruits, which fall on her. From the friction of their brushing against her body, she catches fire and becomes a kind of firewood that produces fire easily when the friction method is used (Armellada and Napolitano 1975: 117, 120). Here the frog, denizen the tree, becomes the tree (i.e. wood) herself. Extinguisher of fire, she becomes the origin of firewood, but only passively, after she has been "civilized" (killed) by males. This reversal of the frog back into wood echoes a related figure-the Wooden Bride-another manifestation of the World Tree.

The Arawak of the Guianas have a similar myth wherein the old woman has the twins "cook" the fish they shoot in the weak and natural fire of the sun's rays while she hides the real fire from them within her mouth. She vomits it up to use it when the twins are gone but licks it up again before they get back. They discover her secret, tie her to the (World) Tree, mound faggots of wood about her, and set her on fire. The fire that was within her now passes to the surrounding wood, which then becomes the prime firewood for mankind (Roth 1915:130).

In another Warao myth (Armellada and Napolitano 1975: 129), the Old Frog Woman simply appears as an equally witholding old human woman who keeps fire from mankind. The myth reinforces the female connotations of the frog through its *oral greed*, a trait related to the Girl Mad about Honey. She asks an Indian to cut down a delicious fruit for her. Again the bunch falls on her; it kills her and converts her into firewood. In the Makiritare variant (Civrieux 1970:141-146) the frog is not converted into firewood directly; after it is killed by the twins they transfer the fire in its stomach into two trees by the twins that stand behind the Old Frog Woman's house.

In all these myths the frog fulfills the mediating function of using fire, not making it. She uses fire aculturally by merely storing it and, worst of all, devouring it in a blatant statement of her

excessive "openness" and libidinous character. In living she defends Nature by extinguishing the fire that threatens the aqueous World Tree; in dying she is tied to it and yields fire passively.

It is in this context that the evil of the Old Frog Lady emerges once again. She, now in human guise, is half-blind and cannibalistic. She kills the sun's wife (Civrieux 1970:82-84, on the Makiritare) and uses her poison to defend the World Tree's secrets. In another Arawak myth (Roth 1915:130) she poisons the mother of the twins by placing her body lice in her mouth. This is another version of the excessively naturalistic consequences of the bodily effluvia of a kindred guardian of the World Tree, the tapir (myth 6).

In only one instance is the Old Frog Woman a positive figure who actively transfers fire to men; and there is a reason for that. This happens in a Yarabara myth (Wilbert 1958:58) wherein she takes pity on men for not knowing of fire, takes it out of her mouth, and voluntarily shows them how to use it. This anomaly happened because she is now the *real* mother of the elder brother-sun surrogate, the creator of mankind, and not his *false* caretaker. When false, the Old Frog Woman must be killed to yield the fire or at the very least be tricked out of it. Moreover in that normal role she is actively malicious, either killing the sun's real mother-wife or being a willing accomplice in her death.

Just as the ancient Frog Witch, like Woman Shaman, is the guardian of the World Tree, which carried on its branches all the fruits of mankind, so too can the frog be the guardian of the magic *brabacot* (a raised fire grid) covered will all the foods the twins will have to steal as they stole fire (Powlison 1974:108, on the Yagua).[8] As she can do with other cultigens, the Frog Lady exudes manioc juice naturally from her wrinkled hide. Alternatively as the Cariñas have it (Armeladda and Napolitano 1975: 224-225), this function can be divided between a human old woman and a frog. The woman kills the mother of the twins, extracts and raises them, and feeds them with the expressed manioc she obtains from a huge pet frog. The twins burn her alive, and rather then firewood, edible fruits like *ocumo*, *mapuey*, and *ñame* spring from her ashes just as they do from the ashes of the analogous Old Black Jaguar Woman or the cayman.

This female frog is in fact the aged counterpart of the Girl Mad about Honey, which Lévi-Strauss rightly analyzed as a symbol of excessive Nature in volume two of his *Mythologiques* (1973). The internal consistency of this symbol is reinforced by the Frog

Lady's passion for fruit, like some scaly Eve, and from the fact that this girl had earlier been seduced by both the opossum and the vulture (Hugh-Jones 1974: 154, on the Barasana), two *avataras* of the Dragon. The fate of this greedy girl is to be drowned in honey (1974L285), whereas the old woman's is to be burned to death with fire.

How the beautiful young Girl Mad about Honey can become the ancient wrinkled Frog Hag is explained by the dangerous consequences of female sexuality, both in its potential for extreme aging and in its capability for rejuvenation. The key lies in women's "poison"-menstrual blood-which they exude like the poison of the tree frog: "According to the Barasana, women live longer then men because they menstruate. Menstruation, they say, is an internal changing of the skin; 'Woman Shaman is old and ugly in the evening yet after every bathing in the morning she becomes young and beautiful' " (Hugh-Jones 1974:163). Here we have an exact parallel between the Girl Mad about Honey, Woman Shaman, and the Frog Lady. They are all "open," and they all have the reptilian capability of sloughing off their skins. Naturalistic women do so internally and so remain beautiful; Frog Hags do so externally, so they remain ugly. By the same logic the sun must menstruate before he transforms himself to rise from the dead and ascend new and beautiful in the east. He does so by becoming the moon, who either causes menstruation in women or is a menstruating woman herself.

The Wooden Bride Needs Additional Carpentry Work

This last association leads from the first two permutations of the World Tree-Dragon Tree and Botanical Tree with an Old Frog Lady inside it-to this key symbol's last and most interesting shape change, the Woman Tree or Wooden Bride (Figure 4f). The logic behind this string is the common practice equating hollow objects, like the hollow World Tree, with women and solid objects with men (Lévi-Strauss 1973:386, on the S. Guarani). As the often encountered myth has it, the first man-or alternatively, the sun acting as a male human culture hero-is without a wife. The cayman, having been caught by the sun in the act of stealing fish from his pond and intending to exculpate his guilt, sculpts the first woman out of wood to give in marriage to the sun (1973:221, on the Macusi).[9] But a direct exchange between two such diametrically

opposed figures is clearly impossible, even in the myth, without the intervention of a mediator. The Wooden Bride is imperfect, especially given her intended purpose. She lacks a vagina. Before the intended marriage can be consummated, the sun's *shakti*, or companion, the woodpecker, must peck out the needed organ with his long phallic beak (Pané 1498? /1974:27-28, on the Taíno).

Yet another variant of this myth confirms the female associations of the World Tree independently of the frog bridging mechanism that led to this transformation. The supporting myth here concerns the other common South American theory of the origin of the first woman: the fish Woman (Figure 4b). These two versions are but manifestations of the same theme couched in different metaphors. A number of shared elements tie them together, for example that fish swim in the aqueous interior of the World Tree and that the aquatic Frog Lady is the origin of fish poison. These World Tree fish are, in fact, the first women, its daughters. One of them is fished up in the form of a sort of mermaid by the first man, whether a human or the sun in human guise (Gillin 1936:170, on the Carib). She too, like the Wooden Bride, cannot have intercourse, although for a different reason. Instead of having no vagina, the Fish Woman's vagina is "inoperative" because it is full of voracious piranha fish (the *vagina dentata* motif), which have to be expelled before marriage can be consummated. Alternatively the primordial woman's stomach is full of fish (Lévi-Strauss 1973:284, on the Machiguenga) or she greedily feeds on dead fish (Lévi-Strauss 1969:60, on the Bororo; 109, on the Warao) and spreads deadly diseases just as the anaconda will do. The anaconda also bears fish in its belly, making a close anaconda = fish equation.

The circle of symbolism continues to close when the *white* heron, its color and long beak making it a mythical substitute for the red woodpecker, wants to have intercourse with the Wooden Bride but is afraid of having its beak attacked. So he obtains an iron pin and the help of a fox. He places the iron pin in the fox's penis, and the voracious fish inside the girl's vagina attack it when the fox mounts her. They blunt their teeth on the iron phallus, and the culture hero can deflower the girl. Using the fox's armored phallus as a proxy it is almost as if the heron's (woodpecker's) bill is attacked by the girl's vaginal fish thus uniting the twin themes of the Fish Woman and the Wooden Bride. If this reasoning seems convoluted consider the Mataco and Toba myth Métraux (1948:19-20) relates in which a fox and a bird (now a falcon, another

masculine-related bird) attempt to have intercourse with the girl. This time the fox is unsuccessful and is mutilated, whereas the falcon uses its magical staff (an artificial phallus-beak) to break the teeth of the girl's vagina and so make her a suitable bride for men. Despite their far removal in space, one in the Venezuelan jungle and the other in the Brazilian Gran Chaco, these two myths make a perfect structurally inverted pair. In the Makiritare case a masculine long-beaked bird helps a fox to use an armored artificial penis to blunt the tiny teeth within the girl's vagina; the Mataco-Toba situation has a masculine short-beaked bird use and artificial armored penis to blunt the *vagina dentata* of the girl after a fox's unsuccessful attempt.

Another bridge between the Fish Woman and the Wooden Bride is the fact that in certain myths both retain fish = anacondas = worms in their vaginas. In addition to having the anaconda for a father the first Fish Woman of Barasana mythology is also an anaconda herself (Hugh-Jones 1974:279). This linkage connects the Fish Woman with the Mother of Boas with Fish in Her Belly independently of their mutual connection with the World Tree = Wooden Bride motif.

In the Wooden Bride transformation, the Dragon is on the inside and on the outside. Thus it synthesizes the first two options where the Dragon was external and internal respectively. The Dragon, however, is no longer a minor form like frogs or fish; it is in one of its most impressive manifestations, the anaconda. Like the fish the anaconda is housed within the woman's womb (Kracke 1978b, on the Tupi-Kagwahiv; Lévi-Strauss 1969:103, on the Bororo), where it adopts the masculine aspect of ambulatory penis, alternatively son and lover to her. This female is both the Wooden Bride and the Fish Woman, as the Warao myth shows by substituting a snake for the fish in the Wooden Bride's vagina. In this version the culture hero, where it adopts the masculine aspect of ambulatory penis, alternatively son and lover to her. This female is both the Wooden Bride and the Fish Woman, as the Warao myth shows by substituting a snake for the fish in the Wooden Bride's vagina. In this version the culture hero *Yar* (the sun) has a woodpecker make the sex organ of his prospective bride, who had been carved out of a tree. Then in a more unusual step he has his father-in-law remove the snake from the girl's newly made vagina before sexual relations can take place (Roth 1915:130-131). The Shipibo in myth 4 have done much the same thing by having a solar-connected Yellow Jaguar remove the worms from the vagina of his new bride through the use of fish poison. In a strict Freudian sense the anaconda must be severed from the woman, thus causing her death (Kracke 1978b, on the Tupi-Kagwahiv). This establishes the

final loop in this complex Gordian knot of symbolism, for everywhere in the lowlands, because of her unique connection with life via childbirth, which she brings forth paradoxically out of corruption and menstruation, the woman is both a symbol of life and a symbol of decay and death (Huxley 1956:217, on the Urubu; Lévi-Strauss 1969:269, on the Tacana; 279, on the Carib; 1973:392-339, on the Carib). The Tacana myth cited above makes this linkage-snakes = worms = sex = women-in a most explicit manner while also involving the image of decay. A jaguar decides not to rape a woman "after he has caught the smell of her vulva, which seems to him to reek of worm-ridden meat" (Lévi-Strauss 1969:269).

It is in menstrual blood that provides the key to the equation of women = poison = death. When the Fish Woman finally comes onto dry land and has her connection with the watery depths (literally, her phallus) severed forever by human males, thereby becoming completely human, she is still persecuted by the jealous water spirits (Roth 1915:241, on the Arawak). This occurs especially when her animal ancestry is most clearly demonstrated, when she menstruates (Weiss 1975:242, on the River Campa). Hence Campa women, like their Shipibo or Cashinahua sisters, cannot approach water while they are menstruating for fear of being impregnated by water spirits (1975:375).[10]

Diseases and death are linked to poison. Because menstrual blood produced by women is thought to be poisonous (Hugh-Jones 1974:161, on the Barasana), it makes sense that another poisonous liquid, fish poison, should also be attributed to women, as in the Old Frog Lady cycle. It is appropriate that when women choose to kill themselves they turn their own poison on themselves. They commit suicide by eating (the mortal connotation of sex = eating is relevant here) barbasco fish poison. "They say that when life in this world is unbearable they prefer to eat barbasco and go to live under the water, like a fish" (Whitten 1976:82, on the Canelos Quichua). Here too we see that the "Fish Woman" born from the water returns to it in death.[11]

Black paint, which is independently linked to women, is derived from the anaconda's liver as is fish poison (Hugh-Jones 1974:164). The predictable links in the chain continue to follow from this association, for the pain his sister applies to the face of the incestuous moon to learn his identity in a common myth is elsewhere identified as black paint or blackened menstrual blood.

It is treated as a poison that "made the moon ill and he died. His body rotted and turned into water. Bats that live by the riverside came out and ate his rotting flesh. This gave them diarrhea so today they hang upside down to stop their feces from running out" (1974:259, on the Barasana). Thus the links from women's menstrual blood = fish poison = death = night = filth and water couple with the excessively "hairy and 'open'" creatures to add congruent negative elements to feminine symbolism.

To those in the Western tradition who have forgotten their Saint Thomas á Kempis, this connection between sex, women, and death may seem a little strange. To a psychologist, a Buddhist, a Taoist, or a South Amerindian animist, however, this juxtaposition of the poles of existence would make immediate sense.

The World Tree Grows New Bark to Live Again

The Campa-Nomatsiguenga have an illuminating myth about the tenacity of the World Tree symbol. Like the anaconda of which it is the dominant symbol, the World Tree can achieve immortality by shedding its bark and rejuvenating a new protective layer, healing itself from the assaults of men. In that myth a culture hero, *Tobatariti*

conceived the idea of cutting a gigantic tree related with darkness. He gathered the people and they tried to cut it down but there was no iron axes in those days and they could not finish the first day. The following morning the tree [had restored itself] and was healthy. This was repeated various times until one morning they got up very early and began to carve the tree, burning it [in addition]. When they finally succeeded [in cutting it down] they climbed on top of the trunk and began to jump with glee. (Shaver 1975:52, trans. mine)

Shaver then adds that other informants maintained that the people were not able to cut down the regenerating tree, resisting as it did all their efforts. This is but one example of the life force and endurance with which the World Tree is associated with in myth.

As a central metaphor the World Tree is an exceptionally durable symbol in real life as well. Such is its strength that it is capable of surviving the impact of acculturation through the creative transformation of its meaning. Thus the bounteous Food Tree becomes a central part of the new Christian-animistic Hallelujah

religion of the Carib-speaking Akawaio of the Guianas. In the describing the Hallelujah prophet Bichiwung, Butt notes:

> During one of his periodic spirit visits to see God he received one seed of every garden product, one banana, one plantain, one huge calabash, and so forth. He planted these in his garden and when they were grown his wife made drink and everyone came and there was enough drink made from the fruit of one banana tree, served in the immense calabash, to last for four days. Bichiwung told his wife to cut the banana and plantain trees right at the bottom so that they would grow again and bear fruit and ever time they grew these two miraculous trees bore their huge fruit. (1960:76)

In recording this modern myth Butt (1960:79-82) ignores its obvious reworking of the Christian miracle of the loaves and fishes as well as the indigenous myths of the calabash and World Tree in favor of a purely naturalistic explanation. Yet, as she notes, this kind of explanation, however true, leaves as much unexplained as it explains. She says:

> It is difficult to explain for certain why this emphasis is placed on Bichiwung's gardens. Perhaps his miraculous garden was merely a particularly fertile one planted with good plants which he might have brought back from the coast of British Guiana. Amerindians are always quick to seize any good strain and to bring back cuttings and roots obtained in their travels. (1960:76)

By treating a clearly mythical episode as if it were history, Butt commits an error equivalent to explaining, for Christians, Jesus' miraculous ability to feed the multitude on his careful selection of oversized loaves and exceptionally meaty fishes. The trees can fill the immense Akawaio womb-calabash because neither of them are naturalistic plants. The huge banana trees represent the inexhaustible fecundity of the World Tree from which hang all fruits (Farabee 1924: 83-84, on the Macusi), including the equally fertile tree calabash. The South Amerindian World Tree dies hard, even under the ax of as complex a world religion as Christianity, whose myths might be expected to supplant its indigenous competition completely. Instead, cut close to its roots, the World Tree regenerates itself as the plantain tree does, to bear new, albeit hybrid, fruit.

Role Reversal and Animal Seducers in the Wet World

Fish Women are Slippery

The ambisexual womblike, yet phallic, World Tree, then anchors the middle of the earth on which humans dwell. Just as the World Tree communicates with subaquatic waters, so too is the human's world surrounded by bodies of water-whether rivers, lakes, or deep pools-that serve as points of entry into the subterranean world below. The Barasana, for example, explicitly link the pools at the edge of the world with doors through which pass obnoxious creatures in a world flood. Woman Shaman, the demiurge and guardian of the Phallic World Tree (Figure 4c):

made a door in the edge of the earth, the …water door, in the East. There was lots of water outside and when she opened the door the waters came in and flooded the earth. The waters rose inside the house. All the possessions in the house became alive. The chicha trough and the long tube for sieving coca became anacondas, the post on which resin is put to light the house became a cayman and the potsherds and other flat objects became piranha fish. These animals began to eat the people. (Hugh-Jones 1974:248)

Here the evil and disastrous consequences of subterranean water become manifest as all the parts of the Dragon-anaconda, cayman, and piranha-combine in toothsome frenzy to devour the first people. Note also that one of the components of the Dragon, the anaconda, is associated with an artifact for drug taking, the agent of metaphorical death (E.J. Langdon 1974), is corroborated when it becomes an agent of real death in the form of an anaconda. This transformation of household (feminine) implements offers a parallel to the Tupi-Kagwahiv version given earlier.

Water, which was contained in the body of the World Tree, thus becomes an ambivalent category. Although male elements may dwell within it, water is primarily associated with females, both in a positive and a negative sense. In the positive sense, women originally came from water. In their pristine form they were fish (Barral 1960:122, on the Warao). Typically as in the Trio myth (Rivière 1969b: 259) a male culture hero catches a Fish Woman.[12] Caught in fish form, she turns, as soon as she is landed, into a beautiful woman. The man, previously a bachelor and ig-

norant of the stuff of civilizations such as cultigens, is taught their use by the woman. Not only is she originally wise and the man untutored; she is also more powerful because of her possession of the phallus. This she has, wither in the form of an ambulatory penis at her beck and call (Figure 4d), or in the more symbolic form of long phallic flutes.

The phallic nature of the flutes is clearly shown in Barasana-Taiwano mythology wherein an excessive and impudent woman angers the anaconda spirits by blasphemously blowing on one with her mouth while sticking the other one up her vagina (T. Langdon 1978). The latter phallic function of the flute is also linked with menstruation and hair, as the model would predict. Hugh-Jones (1974:109) points out that Barasana woman become excessively "open" as a result of seeing the normally prohibited *Yurupary* ("the flutes"). They also menstruate, a condition in which their vaginas become "open," as a result of seeing their hair (and *Yurupary* is later identified with a hairy, libidinous monkey as well as with the anaconda-Dragon). In keeping with the role-reversal myth, if the primal dominant woman uses the flute as a phallus for her own pleasure, it is later used against her by the men to keep her in her place. As a punishment for stealing the flutes "the women are gang-raped, have the flutes rammed up their vaginas and are made to menstruate" (Hugh-Jones 1974:109). The women are artificially opened up and made to bleed from their vaginas. Last, we are specifically told that the flutes are anacondas (1974:53) and penes and that when women had them they were dominant and men menstruated (1974:60). As I mentioned earlier, the Shipibo belief in the *ani ŝhërvi joni* ("big clitoris people") refers to the same kind of situation. One does not have to know the embryonic details of human ontogeny to realize that this grossly enlarged clitoris is a phallic analogue. In these topsy-turvy mythical times, women not only possessed the penis; men performed the female function. They menstruated and they laid the "egg" (Roth 1915:323, on the Carib); they gave birth to children.

As in the Xinguano myth informs us (O. Villas Boas and C. Villas Boas 1973:119-121), the ruling women were then tricked by weaker but more cunning men into surrendering their flutes = penes. Thus the women were now forced to give birth to the "egg." For this reason men now have the power over women as rulers of society and must keep the sacred symbols of their phallic power, the flutes, hidden from the sight of woman by storing them under

the medium the women have left forever: water (Goldman 1963:30-31, on the Cubeo). It seems more than incidental that modern human (versus ancient and mythical) Shipibo women should have to undergo a radical clitoridectomy as part of their female puberty ceremony; it appears as if men were still trying to get rid of their competition.

That anxiety lest the tables again be turned is still present is shown by several myths in which the role reversal backfired. It is such reversals that prove how tenuous and difficult the original capture or power by the men from the women was. The Tupi-Kagwahiv, for instance, relate a myth that appears to illuminate the Shipibo myth of a woman pierced by her fisherman husband turning into a manatee and porpoises. The Kagwahiv myth is about *Kagwahívahẽ*, the "first female", who, angry and bereaves because her husband had shot at her tapir lover with an arrow, took her two children and jumped into the river, transforming them all into porpoises (*mbótu*). Her husband shot at her from the bank, his arrow piercing her and forming the porpoise's blowhole (Kracke 1978a: 18; 1979:142; personal communication 1979).

In this culture as in others, woman first came from the river in the form of a fish (a *jandía* fish in this case) caught by the culture hero *Bahira* (1979:150f.). Porpoises are often (as with the Shipibo) classified in South Amerindian folk taxonomies as a kind of fish. Hence this is the role reversal short-circuited by the Fish Woman. She was originally transformed by man into a human female; now she retransforms herself back into a fish, inaugurating a perfect and disastrous mythical circle. In other myths the Fish Woman enters the world of Culture from the world of Nature passively; here an aggressive female leaves the world of Culture to reenter the world of Nature by turning into a fish.

From the male point of view this action of hers is doubly disastrous: Not only is the man deprived of a wife after he has murdered his rival, her lover; she also takes her children, the continuers of his human culture, with her on her reentry into the subaquatic animal world. Rather than passively accepting the death of her animal lover by merely crying over him as other heroines do in similar lowland myths, *Kagwahívahẽ* aggressively retaliates by leaving her human husband and transforming herself into an animal, presumably taking some of the arts of civilization, such as sorcery, with her.

This unexpected aggressive female response can take an even

more direct turn. The Tupi-Kagwahiv myth still leaves the violence in the hands of the husband who tries to kill his fleeing wife with an arrow. The other response in lowland myth gives the violence directly to the women. It is the famous "Amazon" myth wherein a group of women kill their human husband in retaliation for his killing of their mutual animal lover. An Apinayé variant of what at first appears to be just another variant of the common black cayman seucer myth in which the animal is killed by the cuckholded husband(s), takes an unusual turn. The bereaved wives attack their husbands in mass and kill them with clubs. Henceforth they form the tribe of Amazons who live apart from men and kill all their male children at birth (Nimuendajú 1967:177-178).

In a sense, just as the omnipotent female is the symbol of feminine power in primordial mythical time, so are Amazons the symbol of female power in mythical space; they live now, but far, far away. In some Amazon tales it is significant that such maleless females keep constantly on the move. Thus they illustrate their liminality by never really forming permanent settlements as truly cultured humans do. Amazons represent a permanent sidetracking of the civilizing role-reversal process. They live in the minds of lowland Indian men as vivid alternatives to their current sway.

On a more mundane level the first man conquers the first Fish Woman by getting rid of his phallic competitor and having sex with her himself. Thus the woman is converted into an ordinary woman, and the role reversal takes place. From then on the man becomes the custodian of the arts of civilization, whole women become symbols of animality because of their continuing biologic functions of menstruation and childbirth. First sexless, and therefore civilized, women become sexed, and therefore savage.

Besides Amazons, women are represented in their current animal state by aquatic sirens who have never forsaken their watery domain for the dry land of men. They are, like the first Fish Women, beautiful young women with very *long hair* (Armellada 1964:27-31, on the Pemoń) emphasizing their libidinous, seductive character. Such spirits are the survivors of the original Fish Woman. They lure men from their dry domain into the water, where they keep them enchanted forever as fish (Whitten 1976:39, on the Canelos Quichua). Thus women succeed in transforming men, the transformative agent, back into their own nature, that of fish. These Fish Women-sirens are also anaconda women, as the Sharanahua myth (Siskind 1973:138) shows. Their father was the

anaconda himself, and when exposed to air and sun for a long time they emanate a smell of fish or snake (Powlison 1977:57, on the Yagua). Evil smell and aquatic associates are the correlates of death in the tropical forest, thus demonstrating that the voluptuous sirens are really the agents of death-dealing deculturation.

The male conception of the savagery of women is well illustrated by the *vagina dentata* motif of a Waiwai version of the Trio myth (Fock 1963:42) in which the first Fish Women have piranhas in their vaginas. The male culture hero must flush them out before he can bring about the cultural institution of marriage through the animal act of sex. It is here that we may understand the liminal role of the male Forest Ogre. This supernatural is a cannibal who lives in the heart of the forest and molests people who trespass on his domain. He is uncivilized because of his *negative* relations with women: He kills them through copulation. The culture hero on the other hand has a *positive* relationship with women; he learns from them via intercourse. Hence the male Forest Ogre never experiences a transformation. He is the terrestrial and male counterpart of the aquatic female siren. He ceaselessly pursues cultural women while the culture hero himself becomes cultivated by converting cultured women into animals.

Once the women become "normal" their animal nature hides beneath a human exterior. This contrasts with their pristine state when they possessed a cultured nature hidden beneath an exterior animal form. Now that they have had their nature changed, their original medium, water, becomes inimicable to them. Thereafter, women will be molested by male water spirits who will keep them in their place should they approach the water when their interior is exteriorized through menstruation and childbirth. To look upon the act of menstruation as an act of cultural rebellion may seem a bit farfetched, but the critical role of one of the most formidable male aquatic "enforcers," the freshwater dolphin, illustrates how important the continued submission of females is to men in the South American tropical forest.

Dolphins Are Dangerous

Both the innocuous small gray (*Inia geoffroyensis*) and the large red (*Stheno tucuri*) long-snouted freshwater dolphins are actually held in terror by both mestizos and Indians throughout the entire Amazon basin.[13] This is so because it is believed that they

can cause grave illnesses, as I once observed in a Shipibo *nishi* curing session. A young man had accidentally harpooned a dolphin when he was fishing, and later his infant brother fell gravely ill. His worried family consulted a shaman, who diagnosed the problem as the revenge of the dolphin sorcerers for the loss of their comrade.[14]

Despite the critical limitation of animal protein in the jungle (less so on the main rivers), the dolphin is never eaten. Being ubiquitous, easy to catch, and an exceptionally large packet of meat, it defies any simpleminded materialistic analysis that South American Indians only taboo hard to obtain and therefore economically useless animals. It is tabooed food for very powerful ideological reasons alone. One had best not molest, let alone eat, a powerful shaman. Karsten (1964:58, on the Jívaro) has provided a plausible explanation of why this identification is made. Among groups like the Jívaro and the Shipibo, where sorcery consists of the witch doctor blowing magical "darts," sometimes over great distances, into the body of his victim, it seems perfectly logical to fancy that the dolphin is also bewitching people when it surfaces. This is because, when it opens its blowhole to expel old air and take in new, the dolphin makes the same blowing and whistling sound that sorcerers make when they bewitch their victims. When the dolphin's well-known propensity for deliberately following close to canoes paddled by people is taken into account, it is easy to see how such a harmless animal could have acquired such an evil reputation. Subjectively there is no sound more haunting than the humanlike booming cough of dolphins when they breach at night in the moon-bathed waters of a tropical forest lake.

According to Shipibo belief, a woman is particularly susceptible to the red dolphin's spells during her period. The dolphin will cause her to sleep continually so that he can sexually molest her. Later, only the woman's erotic dreams will tell her of his visit. If not saved by human males, any woman so involved in excessive sexual activity, however unknowingly, will gradually waste away and die (see myth 2). Or as Karsten (1964:198) points out, the woman may be made pregnant and give birth to monstrous were-children (*yoshinwaké*) which are immediately killed. Hence the Shipibo women's practice of fetching water from the lake to bathe on dry land. In other groups, such as the Kalapalo (Basso 1973:81), a woman is enjoined against eating water creatures during her period. Similarly, the Kalapalo associate illness in women with

water creatures like stingrays (1973:116). These menstruation taboos are extended to the postpartum period by many groups, like the Wayana (Miller 1974).

Given the role of the dolphin as successful seducer, it makes great sense that when men want to seduce women they employ, as Shipibo males do (Karsten 1964:198), a powder produced from the pulverized eye, fat, teeth, or penis of the dolphin as part of their love magic. The Canelos-Quichua have a similar use for the teeth of the freshwater dolphin (Whitten 1976:61). I can erect the following correspondences and oppositions to account for the data so far: civilizing Fish Women = water/uncivilized men = land, civilizing Fish Women → human women/water (through the mediating act of male-imposed intercourse) as uncivilized men/water → civilized men = water therefore civilizing fish women : water : : civilized men : water, and its converse.

The Anaconda, Original Case of Penis Envy

The Anaconda, another anomalous animal, enters the system as that mediating agent of masculine-associated intercourse referred to above. It too, like the other animal symbols, is a dualistic symbol-both a phallic and a uterine signifier. The anaconda is anomalous because it represents the overlapping of male and female categories, the most fundamental oppositionary dyad in South American tropical forest culture. To borrow a Venn diagram from Leach's (1976) work on Sacred Twins, Figure 8 represents the generation of the anaconda category. The definitions of the two sex categories on which the anaconda is based proceeds directly from the strict matrix Rivière (1969b:262-268) presents. With some additions, there are:

Male	*Female*
Hard	Soft
Virtue	Corruption
Order	Chaos
Aggressiveness	Passivity
Life	Death
Marriage rules	Incest, promiscuity
Culture	Nature
Right hand	Left hand
Red, yellow, white	Black, blue, green
Sun	Moon

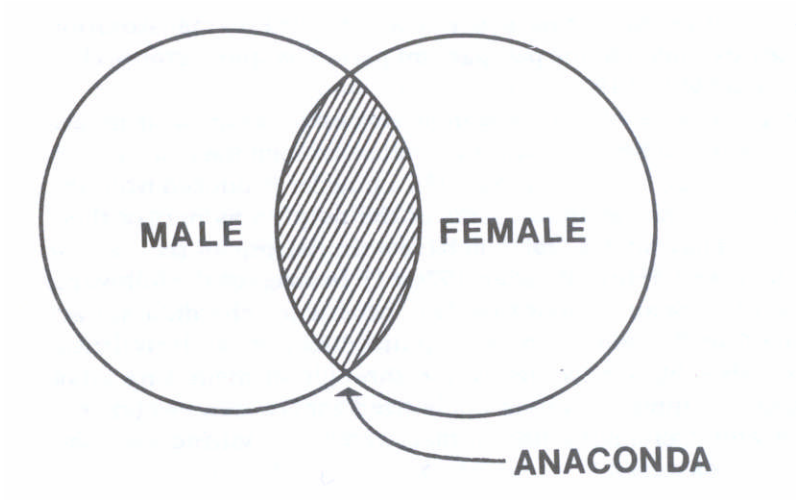


Figure 8. The Anaconda as an Anomalous Category

Other subsidiary or corollary pairs, such as women being "wet" and men "dry," with the former being explicitly related to "rottenness" and "rawness" (Arcand 1974, on the Cuiva); men = east/women = west (Hugh-Jones 1974:213, on the Barasana); men = circumspect/women = curious; men = closed/women = open (1974:103), could be added almost indefinitely. See Faron (1964a:181, 184) for a nearly identical list from the Mapuche.

Many of these associations will not come as any surprise to those familiar with the mythology of other world areas (Glasse 1965:34); yet they present evident contradictions. Although the opposing lists of terms derive from the sex act itself, they separate the sexes too completely. It is almost as if the matrix attempts to deny what everyone knows, that progeny, the result of intercourse and essential for the perpetuation of society, result from the inescapable conjunction of male and female.

That this conjunction is very frightening for males is illustrated by the Tupi-Kagwahiv, who explicitly connect dreaming about sex with a woman and physical injury. As one male informant state, "If you dream of a woman's genital, it's a wound you are going to get" (Kracke 1979:144); "you cut yourself" (Kracke 1977). Here we see the strongly felt physical foundation of the manifest analogy South Amerindian men see between women and danger. The vertical slit in a woman's body is likened to a slit

wound inflicted by a man's knife (see the woodpecker Wooden Bride myths)—his penis—which he can also inflict on himself.

Therefore the whole cosmologic system of which these matrices and associations are a part seems to fulfill Lévi-Strauss's (1967:112) assertion about the general function of myth: that it narrows and thereby seems to solve a logical contradiction posed by the culture without actually ever doing so. The ultimate conundrum of the model is how the child, symbol of emergent life, could emerge from the feminine womb, symbolic home of death and contagion. The anaconda as one component of the composite Dragon is really a device to transform the stringent oppositionary logic evident in the system's matrices into the dialectic of an analogical continuum logic (Figure 9) and thus bridge the original contradiction.

On the male side, the anaconda represents the erect penis ready for intercourse (Goldman 1963:94, on the Cubeo). It incorporates hardness, the cultural metaphor for masculinity current in the tropical forest (Huxley 1956:152, on the Urubu). With it the

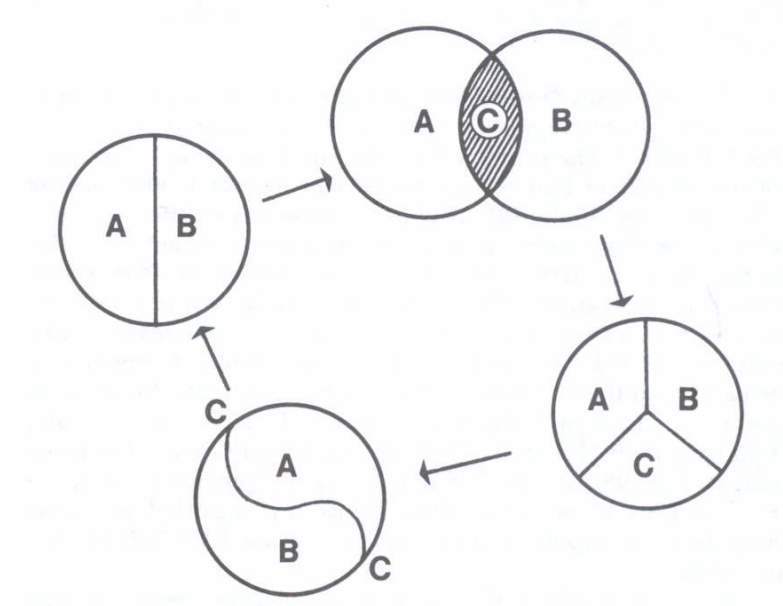


Figure 9. Change from a Static Oppositionary System to a Dynamic Complementary One

civilized masculine principle can menace and thereby constrain female animality whenever it approaches the water (Crocker 1977:137, on the Bororo), man's domain ever since the mythical role reversal. After all, these societies invented gang rape as an appropriate and socially sanctioned tool of social control.

But when in the service of women during sex, the penis is "devoured" and "injured" by their vaginas; ejaculation occurs; and the man loses his virtue. The penis becomes flaccid. Softness, the woman's category, triumphs and Culture is placed in jeopardy. It is in this state that the anaconda = penis assumes its feminine connotations. As Reichel-Dolmatoff (1971:102) says, for the Desana, it then has

the connotation of putrid matter, of a pathogenic "residue."…This snake is called…a term that can be translated as abortion, creature, or reject of the river. With this idea, the concept of "leftovers," "dirty," and "loathsome" are associated. The anaconda is not an especially dangerous reptile, but it causes a profound disgust to those who see it, and the expression frequently repeated…is "despicable"…it is "the remains of something that was…the whole where something was…an impotent, useless penis." (1971:215)

These feelings of revulsion for the anaconda can also turn to fear, as the Pichis region Campa and the Amuesha data indicate (Elick 1969:41). The primary basis for this fear is the fermenting rotting contagion that the anaconda can project in the form of lethal diseases (1969:212). This association places the anaconda with the rainbow, either as a giant anaconda (Dumont 1977:206, on the Panare; Karsten 1964:47, on the Canelos; D. Moore, personal communication 1978, on the Tupi-Gavião; Whitten 1976:39, on the Canelos-Quichua) or as a celestial phenomenon whose two ends rest in the open mouths of two anacondas (Nimuendajú 1946a:234, on the E. Timbira). The rainbow, as befits this association, is also the herald of sickness (Basso 1973:22, on the Kalapalo; Holmberg 1969:120, on the Sirionó), the actual ender of sickness (Barral 1960:95, on the Warao), or, more generally, calamity (Karsten 1964:47, on the Lengua). Hence it is regarded as "something demonic, repulsive, and detested" (Weiss 1975:287) like the anaconda.[15]

From the rainbow the chain of associations works its way back through water to women, thus forming a perfect loop. The

shape of the rainbow is associated, for example, with the two semicircles or arches of a graphically represented vagina. Indeed, in keeping with the ambivalence of this symbol, the Tukano (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1975:171) regard the rainbow as a kind of ceremonial vagina.

It is a short metaphorical trip from the arched body of the anaconda to the arched Milky Way as another celestial anaconda (Tastevin 1925:182, on the Tupi). The Milky Way is also described as a foaming river of sickness, the anaconda = rainbow's attribute, which flows through the night sky of the Desana cosmos (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1971:43). Dumont (1976:104, on the Panare) has also called attention to the isomorphism that exists between the rainbow, visible during the day, and especially during the rainy season, and the Milky Way, visible at night, particularly during the dry season. These contrasts add structural elegance to the perceived similarities of form between these two celestial phenomena and the Great Snake.

The association between the anaconda and the rain has its roots in the native ethological observations, for as Hugh-Jones (1974:144) points out, the anaconda has a thunderous, guttural hiss when it is provoked. Not only does this hiss simulate the thunder associated with rain (and also with earthquakes), but it calls up the din = filth = females equation of the model.[16] The anaconda= rain correspondence is also perfectly symbolized by one of the creature's lesser manifestations, the electric eel (*Electrophorus electricus*), which in Arawak mythology (Farabee 1918: 77-78) is given the appropriate task of controlling the thunder, the rains, and the directionality of the cloud's flight. In Tupi-Kagwahiv dream symbolism (Kracke 1978a:185) it is equally appropriately associated with large snakes and penes.

Schindler offers the following myth that equated noise with snakes:

In the river there lived a giant snake that always devoured people when they sat down on a rock in the riverbank. For this reason a man made a basketry framework out of strong lianas and gave it the appearance of a human being by using a certain tree bark. He placed this basketry figure on a rock and then sat inside, equipped with a drum and a sharp knife. As soon as the snake had swallowed the figure with the man inside, the man began to drum continuously in the snake's belly. This continual noise coming from its insides make the snake madder and madder. Desperately,

It swam up and down the river. When it finally came to a shallow spot, the man cut open the snake's belly and jumped out, thereby killing it. But the worms that lived in the belly of the giant snake had attached themselves in the man's ears, nose and eyes, and he died shortly thereafter. (1977:68, on the Carijona)

This myth parallels other myths about a culture hero outwitting a dumb ogre by hiding inside the frame of its prey animal. In the Tupi myth about the theft of fire from another aspect of the Dragon, the vulture, a man leaps out from behind a deerskin before he is devoured by the aerial creature, rather then cutting himself out after being swallowed by an aquatic one. In the first case in keeping with the more positive associations of the air, the culture hero does so merely to steal something from the Dragon surrogate while leaving it unharmed, whereas in the evil aquatic realm the culture hero must kill the Dragon itself to win a negative prize: his freedom and its disappearance. In the first case he lives; in the second, the culture hero must die.

The Carijona myth also establishes independent of the same linkage in Shipibo myth 4 a link between worms (in the vulture's case, maggots) and the anaconda. Note also that symbol of excessive noise, the anaconda, is driven man, and ultimately to his death, by too much "din." Another element of interest in this myth is that when the Dragon is performing the feminine function as "devourer," rather than the masculine function as "penetrator," it is killed from the *inside* rather than being pierced from the *outside* as when it is male. The same correspondence between a feminine and a masculine death occurs with the terrestrial anaconda analogue, the tapir. In myth 6 the tapir is the male seducer and so is killed by an arrow from the outside, but when in myth 7 the tapir is fulfilling the feminine function of guardian of the World Tree (genipa variant), it is cut from the inside.

Not only is the anaconda feared as the bringer or herald of evil; like its alter ego the dolphin, the anaconda is taboo as human food. When man did not possess fire he warmed foul things like fungus, termites, caterpillars, and rotten wood in the light of the sun (T. Turner 1968:15a, on the Northern Kayapó), thus making them "rare." That was the time of animality, the natural domain of the anaconda. Now that he has fire these noxious things are tabooed as food. Thus I predict, in a myth I have not yet encountered. That the first people, in the age before the fire was given to them, will be stated to have eaten snakes, scorpions, and the like.

Foreigners, the dwellers of a similar twilight world on the outer ring of civilization, are already associated with the eating of snakes, particularly dead snakes. Siskind (1970) notes that sorcery is connected with the eating of snakes in Sharanahua belief (just as in Shipibo belief sorcerers convert themselves into snakes). They ascribe such a nasty culinary preference to the despised Culina sorcerers. Moreover, in keeping with the filth = snake equation, the Culina never bathe.

Shipibo myth 3 takes the chain of associations one step further, from plagues of harmful diseases to plagues of noxious insect and animal pests. A man who was a bad hunter meets a boa disguised as a person. The boa wants to instruct the man in hunting skills, but in blowing through his blowgun he only succeeds in emitting hordes of stinging, poisonous creatures like mosquitoes, back biting flies, stingrays, scorpions, spiders, and vipers. In a similar way the Yagua Forest Ogres use vipers as their blowguns (Powlison 1977:57). The Shipibo myth helps to explain why the Amahuaca, a backwoods Panoan-speaking tribe of the same geographic and linguistic background as the Shipibo, have a bit of hunting magic whereby the aspiring hunter must drink the excrement of a boa (Carneiro 1970:339). The fact that it is the boa's excrement that is drunk corresponds well to the definition of the creature as associated with filth. This bit of ethnography also neatly reverses the polarity of the hunter in Shipibo myth. The front-to-rear anal tube of the anaconda (from whence the excrement) contrasts the rear-to-front mouth tube (the blowgun) of the hunter (from whence the pests).

Another Shipibo myth (myth 4) equated the giant earthworm (*Amphisbaena fulginosa*) with the anaconda (*Eunectes murinas gigas*), as the Desana also do (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1971:209), thus showing that the anaconda can take on other similarly loathsome forms. The Shipibo myth clearly duplicates the actions of Mair's Ghost Penis, the *Rankuaĩang* (Huxley 1956:150-151) of Urubu mythology. In the Shipibo version the earthworm, like the primordial penis of the Urubu culture hero, is an ambulatory subterranean phallus that women call up at will from the ground to squat and take their pleasure upon. Yet another Shipibo myth (myth 5) shows the aquatic character of that subterranean realm by having the anaconda perform the same function as the earthworm, but now called up from beneath a lake.[17] In both Shipibo myths, as elsewhere, this slave-lover is doomed to be killed, sec-

tioned, and attached to the individual bodies of men so that they can fulfill its original function, but now as masters and not as slaves.[18] In myth 4 the giant earthworm is anomalously killed by the girl's old mother when she pours hot boiling "cooked" water down its hole. The earthworm dies as the anaconda lives, noisily. The anomaly of the sex of the murderer is cleared up when we find out that the mother kills the earthworm so the daughter can marry a normal man. In myth 5 the anaconda is killed by a human male who is the potential husband of the girl, and he does so without the need of a female intermediary, again rescuing the animal's woman lover for civilization.

Links continue to build with the role reversal myth when, in the giant earthworm variant, the young girl wanders off into the jungle to end her despondency at the hands, or should I say paws, of the Yellow Jaguar, only to have him marry her. But before he can consummate the marriage, in an episode harking all the way back to the Wooden Bride myths, he must flush the earthworm's brood out of her vagina using a fish poison. I have already made the case that this fish poison is really the woman's own menstrual blood, which the male is now using against her to "open" her up for intercourse. The common tale of the moon causing women to menstruate for the first time by opening them up clandestinely for illegitimate nocturnal intercourse, rather than for legitimate diurnal intercourse, is the inverse of this episode. This *vagina dentate* Wooden Bride-Fish Woman association represents another case of where, although the mythological character changed its guise in a mythical variant (as here where the anaconda father of the Fish Woman becomes her giant anaconda incestuous lover), all of the original associations of that figure (water, underworld, fish, females, and *vagina dentate*) still prevail in the mutant.

Another Carijona myth supplies an additional connection to these associations by having the subaquatic lover cut up by birds to form fish:

Some kingfishers la in their hammocks and rocked back and forth by pushing themselves with a stick (…their long beaks). They sang, "*Itshurekwa* is hunting without worry while his wife makes love to *Kanakanani*." Because *Itshurekwa* heard their song from far away, he came over and told the kingfishers to repeat the song. When they refused, he broke their sticks, whereupon they sang the song again. Then *Itshurekwa* wanted to see for himself that his wife had a lover. He climbed a tree on the

riverbank. Soon his wife came to the river and struck the water with a gourd bowl, whereupon the water began to subside, and the water demon *Kanakanani* appeared in the shape of a handsome man. As he began to make love to the woman on a sandbank, *Itshurekwa* sent a gadly against *Kanakanani* and it killed him. The demon rolled off the woman, who ran back to the house. *Itshurekwa* went to the water, cut off *Kanakanani*'s penis, and wrapped it up in leaves. Then he returned to the house, where his wife was just about to prepare manioc cakes, and put the package on the roasting plate. The wife assumed that her husband was roasting a big larva and began to eat a piece of it together with manioc. When he hinted to her what she was chewing, she ran to the water and vomited. The bits of penis changed into *sabaleta* fish, the bits of manioc into thornbacks. *Itshurekwa* ran after his wife and slew her with the pole used for stretching the *tipiti*. She changed into a dolphin and the pole into an electric eel. (Schindler 1977:69)

Nearly every aspect of this interesting myth can be decoded given the keys presented in this model. The hero is helped to kill the Aquatic Dragon and section him for his own use by long-beaked phallic birds (the kingfisher acting an analogous role to the woodpecker in the Wooden Bride myths). The myth is an exact parallel to similar myths cited later wherein a human male climbs up a tree to kill his masculine animal competitor, often the cayman aspect of the Dragon, in a masculine way, from the outside. The hero then reverses the polarity of his adulterous, and therefore excessively "natural," wife by making her take the penis in the mouth-above-rather then in her vagina-below. Marked still by too great a degree of sexuality, for after all to "eat" in this system is to have sex, the woman is then made to commit antisex: to vomit. Then she is further civilized (i.e., killed) by a solid masculine staff, which becomes an animal phallus thanks to its role in transformation, while she becomes an aquatic seducer and spawns fish. Note here that contrary to the *vagina dentate* myth, of which this is a direct inversion, with the woman proceeding from Culture to Nature and not from Nature to Culture, she ejects fish from her mouth and not from her "other mouth," her vagina. The symmetries involved are almost too pat when it is realized that *Kanakanani* is really the anaconda lover in Shipibo myth 5. There, because the anaconda was in its *animal guise*, the female called to him with her gourd "womb," making noise, creating a "din" to have sex. Furthermore they have sex in the *water*. In the Carijona variant from half a continent away, because the anaconda is in his *human guise*,

the same gourd was used to make an equal noise,[19] but the waters recede and the couple have sex on a *dry beach*.

Poor *Kanakanani* cannot win by merely changing his shape, for now he is in human guise his onetime animal friend, the stinging insect (gadfly) must act as the human's agent and kill him rather than posthumously helping him against the human, as the wasp does in the Shipibo variant because there he was in his legitimate animal form.

Now let me go back and examine more explicitly the link between the anaconda and the Fish Woman, the real identity of the doomed heroine of these two myths. Among the Waiwai, who have a rile reversion myth similar to the Xinguano prototype cited earlier, the anaconda is clearly related to fish and all other swimming creatures. The first Fish Woman was in fact a member of the anaconda people who dwell at the bottom of the river (Fock 1963:25). The Sharanahua, a backwoods Panoan tribe like the Amahuaca, do this more directly by having the culture hero fish up a Snake Woman from a lake (Siskind 1973:138). Among the Waiwai, the chief anaconda, father of the Fish Woman, is actually the "Father of All Fishes." He is "a particular king of anaconda that boasts a thick body and a shirt tail" (Fock 1963:25). Within his bulbous body he contains all water creatures. The Shipibo have the same account, but they reverse the sex of the boa, calling her "Mother of All Boas" and specifying that she too carries all water creatures in her belly. This sex change makes structural sense when we remember that in the Waiwai account the *daughter* of the Father of All Fish = boas brings *female* articles of culture to a naïve man, whereas in the inverted Shipibo version the Mother of All Boas = fish has a *son* who brings the *masculine* art of hunting to a naïve man. Further, to the extent that hunting pertains to the realm of Nature-the savage jungle- the Culture/Nature opposition is maintained in the proper roles throughout the content shift between the two myths. This explains why the Shipibo and the Waiwai both fear and venerate the anaconda. He-she brings the positive assets of proper cultural behavior to women and proper savage behavior to men while balancing these gifts with the negative threats of death through contagion, the attacks of innumerable dangerous insect and animal pests, and the more insidious cultural death by sexual seduction into the realm of Nature via a Faustian exchange.

Because all the animal figures discussed here are dualistic

and I have so far charted the "mortality: component of the anaconda's symbolism, readers should not be astonished to learn that another aspect of its character represents exactly the opposite. The anaconda is also a symbol of "immortality" par excellence; "it is one of those animals which does not die. When its skin has become too old or when it has become too narrow to contain its constantly growing body, it abandons its old skin, makes a new one and begins life as young as it was on the day it was born" (Tastevin 1925:173, on the Tupi, J.-P. Dumont, trans.). Indians have notices that anacondas, like the other reptiles and amphibians with which they are identified-such as lizards, cayman, and frogs-never stop growing until her death, although the rate of growth does progressively slow down as they age. Further, unlike the others, the anaconda actually sheds its skin, the perfect natural metaphor for rebirth (Huxley 1956:92, on the Urubu). Thus this figure symbolizes the duration of existence from its ephemeral to its eternal poles. Note that the World Tree, which is really the anaconda's parent and the parent as well of the Fish Woman, just as the anaconda is the parent of the Fish Woman, also shares these same characteristics.

Some groups, like the Desana, have tried to come to terms with the anaconda's duality by making a distinction among the constrictor snakes using the female = water/male = land opposition. Whereas all groups relate the anaconda to other snakes (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1971:203, on the Desana; O. Villas Boas and C. Villas Boas 1973:190, on the Xinguano), the Desana propose a division between land boas = male = white = Master of Animals = red opposed to water boas = anaconda = female = black (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1971:57, 102). In the Desana context this division also involves male restraint of sexuality = marriage rules in opposition to female insatiable sexuality = incest (1971:183,216). These same correlations hold elsewhere because, where the snake is associated with the sun, liked as the later is to the male principle, it will be a land boa, which is red in color. This land boa then becomes the "sun's cudgel" (Fock 1963:35, on the Waiwai).

One can also differentiate among the snakes by separating the male, terrestrial, poisonous (exterior, stabbing) rattlesnakes associated with the sun (Dole, personal communication 1978, on the Kuikuru) from the constricting (interior, swallowing) boas associated with the water, the moon, and females. So pervasive is the association of snakes with water and of the anaconda as symbol of

all snakes, however, that even terrestrial forms like the rattlesnake are liked with water (Kozák et. Al. 1979:394, on the Héta).

One can now begin to appreciate why the anaconda represents a key figure in tropical forest cosmology. It presents the ultimate paradox of an androgynous being that combines the essence of all sexuality within its body. It is both a "he" and a "she," a demiurge who, as the Panare (Dumont 1977:206) have it, autocopulates constantly.

In this discussion of the anaconda I have mentioned the way color can affect the symbolic role of this and other animal symbols. Thus when the boa is an agent of the sun (a very rare phenomenon) it is red, the color pertinent both to males and the sun. In its much more common guise as an aquatic boa, the largest of which is the anaconda, its color is black, the color of women and the moon, both of whom are in turn associated with the aquatic realm and fish. When both color and nature team up the consequences are a "double dose," as the following Yagua admonition shows: "Women ought not to touch the grease of the black boas because that can impregnate them and cause them an abdominal tumor which can cause their death" (Powlison 1977:62, trans. mine). On the other hand when opposite categories confront each other, they can neutralize each other, as when red peppers can "cook" out the evil boa from the belly of a woman (1977:62).

The Snake's Blood Has All the Colors of the Rainbow

There are many ways to code the world. Lévi-Strauss (1973) has shown how culinary codes can carry many messages. Dumont (1977) has emphasizes the role of acoustic codes. Yet the code of that most refractory of all senses, the olfactory, remains largely unanalyzed. Number codes and color codes can also contribute their redundant messages, on different sheds, to give texture, depth, and sheen to the emerging warp and weft of symbolic communication.

I do not deal with the number code very extensively in this model for the simple reason that tropical forest groups have a notoriously limited counting capacity (Weiss 1975:239). For example, having limited mathematical competence myself, I was blissfully at home in Shipibo culture, which is graced by only three number terms: *huestiora* ("one"), *rabë* ("two"), and *ícha* ("many").

For the higher calculations required by the comparatively recent partial dependence on an external money market economy, the Shipibo have had to borrow the cumbersome Quechua counting system or Spanish number terms. When they have to sell their pottery or textiles to tourists, Shipibo women can calculate in Spanish or Quechua as well as anyone; yet such a need is not the product of the aboriginal system, characterized as it was by qualitative barter and prestations.

In contrast, chiefdom-descended cultures like the Kogi (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1974:295) have placed more emphasis on the significance of a number code, such as the cosmologic importance of the four cardinal points and the fifth "direction," center (zenith-nadir). In the highlands, where state-level systems had elaborate calendrical systems (Vescelius 1974; Zuidema 1977), or on the coast, where remnants of that system still survive (Sharon and Donnan 1974, on the Trujillo Mestizo), ritual numbers such as 3, 9, or 13 still carry symbolic force and can be manipulated for structural purposes. Yet none of this carries much significance for the jungle where this model arose.

If numbers are too great or interdeterminate to be anything but "several" or "myrid" in the tropical forest, colors are everywhere. The numbers of greens in the jungle vegetation are limitless, and the splashes of color produced by flowers on a hanging vine high in the jungle canopy when a glint of light strikes them are truly striking. But it is the fauna, both insect and animal, that really provides the palette. Indeed as many writers have noted, in contrast to the somber species of the northern temperate forest, the denizens of the jungle (particularly the avifauna) exhibit a veritable riot of gaudy coloration. As these are the animals used to "code" the model, it is no surprise to find that colors play an important role in the intricate organic machinery.

A single key theme symbolized much of this color coding: the birds bathing in the blood of the Rainbow Dragon (serpent). In this theme the language of color comes from "nature's palette," the rainbow, a metaphor for the Dragon himself. Paradoxically the somber colored Dragon, inhabitant of the dark underworld, contains within his plain exterior a gaudy interior. When cut, his blood wells up, like the blood (water) that wells up from the earth (Chaplin 1976:63, on the Cuna), to color the gaily painted exterior of the celestial birds (Figure 5). From the dull to the gaudy, once more

the model provides for a dynamic interpenetration of categories that serves to tie together otherwise opposed and antagonistic entities.

Five mythical variants of the technicolor theme referred to above start the transitive chain of associations between the dull and the gaudy. The first establishes the opposition of the birds to the Dragon (snake), who turns into the brilliantly colored rainbow. The second links the equally brilliant birds of the air to the dusky subaquatic serpent through the mediating influence of a dull-feathered diver. The third introduces these birds to their coiled birdbath. The fourth shows the equivalence of the Dragon with his daughter, the Wooden Bride, through their equally sanguinary nature, and the fifth links the birds' colors to the ever-changing hues of the snake's blood.

Variant 1, **Vilela**

A widow had an only son who was fond of catching birds, especially hummingbirds… This obsession worried his mother, who had a presentiment that it might lead to disaster [naturally, for the hummingbird is the bird of the Dragon's enemy, the sun], but he paid no heed to her. One day he found some small stones [symbols of the earth, the Dragon's home] of different colors at the water's edge. He carefully collected them in order to pierce them and make himself a necklace. Hardly was the necklace around his neck when he changed into a snake and in this form took refuge at the top of the tree. He grew bigger and fatter [eating the fruit-little wombs-of the World Tree] and turned into a cannibal monster which began exterminating the villages one after another. An Indian resolves to kill him, and a fight is started between them. In spite of the help given to him by the dove [the bird as the agent of man], the man was on the point of succumbing, when all the birds together came to his aid…They attacked the monster and blinded it. The other birds finished it off, disembowelled it, and set free its victims, many of whom were still alive. Whereupon the birds withdrew, each family going in a specific direction [and now each with its specific coloration after having bathed in the monster's blood?]. Shortly afterward it rained and the monster's corpse appeared in the air in the shape of the rainbow, which ever since that time has always existed and always will exist. (Lévi-Strauss 1969:304-304)

***Variant 2*, Arecuna, Arawak**

Keyemen-the rainbow in the shape of a huge water-snake-…was the grandfather of aquatic birds, and the entrance to his subterranean abode was at the bottom of the pool [and he is killed by two diving birds, on the Arecuna (Lévi-Strauss 1969:262)]. Men and birds joined forces to destroy the huge water-snake, which dragged all living creatures down to his lair. But the attackers took fright and cried off, one after the other, offering as their excuse that they could only fight on dry land. Finally the duckler [a diver] was brave enough to dive into the water; he inflicted a fatal wound on the monster which was at the bottom, coiled around the roots of an enormous tree. Uttering terrible cried [the din of the monster must be met by the noise of men], the men succeeded in bringing the snake out of water, where they killed it and removed its skin [to prevent it from rejuvenating itself]. (1969:303, on the Arakwak)

***Variant 3*, Waiwai**

[A Waiwai woman] had an anaconda b the name of *Petali* as a pet. She kept it in an enclosure which consisted of a broad basin [an aquatic womb] in the Mapuera river. The anaconda lived on the meat brought to it by the woman [in a reversal of the normal relations between the human sexes], and her husband shot a lot of meat. All she brought the anaconda, however, was a small agouti each time she herself ate big animals [oral greed]. Someone or other told the anaconda and it became angry. When the woman next came [to have intercourse with him] with a little agouti and called, "*Petali, Petalí,*" the anaconda did not answer at all, being angry with her. The woman went on calling [making an excessive noise], and at last *Petali* jumped out of the water and swallowed [eat = sex] her. It then swam far, far away down the river. [The husband magically summons otters, who swim on the surface of the water and who, in legions, surround the anaconda and cut up the river into whirlpools [jaws = wombs] and waterfalls, this making a trap. The anaconda threatens to eat [i.e., copulate with] them, but they jump into his body, take the woman's bones, and come out his rear end. Next the people poison the river, *Petali* jumps out and is cut in half], the tail [penis] have enough strength to jump into the river again and from that derives all anacondas,. When *Petali* had been cut in half the riverbanks swam with blood… the bird people bathed in this and became proper birds [while all the other animal people became transformed into regular *animals*]. After the bath in the serpent's blood [water] a heavy shower took place. [The old woman who had poisoned the water then dies, and the fish poisons spring from her body.] (Fock 1963:63-65)

***Variant 4*, Warao**

[The same nasty operation now happens to the Wooden Bride, alias the Fish Woman, daughter of the anaconda. The woodpecker has just carved her sex to make her a suitable bride for the sun, master of all birds, when] out poured suddenly a flood of blood. With it the head of the red-headed woodpecker was stained…The macaw arrived and stained his breast. But her blood had the peculiarity of changing its color; luckily those birds with the brightest colors were stained first. Later the blood turned white like milk, and the herons came and were stained white…even later when the blood had coagulated and putrified the *zamuro* [another bird] arrived and rolled around in it and was left, since then, painted black. (Barral 1960:98-99, trans. mine)

***Variant 5*, Shipibo**

Referring to the *Yoashico* myth 10, the Evil-or *Ŝhanö*-Inca falls into a trap, a hole in the ground. He is analogous to the Dragon; indeed his first name is similar (save for the stress phoneme) to his tool, *shanó*, the fer-de-lance viper. Thus he could be called the "Viper or Snake" Inca. As holes in the earth are entryways into the subaquatic underworld, here again the Dragon is in his deep pool. He is killed with arrows and his body is dragged out of the pit (i.e., pool), blood spurting from his many wounds. Then various birds, allies of men, bathe in his blood, those who are first getting their brilliant red colors, those last receiving their dusty orange colors. Finally, the tardiest bird swallows his liver and is tainted a dark green by the bile.

In these five variants are the extremes of high-flying, brightly colored birds of pure celestial connotations receiving their coloration from the deep-lying, dull-colored Subaquatic Dragon's polluting (or menstrual, as with the Wooden Bride) blood. A mediator, an anomalous diving bird, connects these realms into one vertical system centered on the World Tree.

Just as categories are not rigidly separated in these myths, so the color of the Dragon shifts and changes like the visible spectrum that is his celestial manifestation: the rainbow. This I think is the key to understanding color symbolism in the tropical forest of South America. It is not so much that the colors themselves-ethnotaxonomically shifting categories of hue and chroma that they are-need rigidly to be adhered to but their relative lightness or darkness. Reichel-Dolmatoff (1978b:256-258) says as much in

his recent discussion of the symbolism of Tukano color distinctions. He suggests that they believe the sun engenders both heat and light, which separates into three separate color "energies": a brilliant red for woman, a brilliant white for neutral categories, and a brilliant yellow for men. Here the red seems to stand for women's blood and the yellow doe men's semen, their "blood". These colors later blend at death to return to the sun once more. This triad of sun colors is opposed to the colors the moon produces-three parallel cold, dark colors: pale green, pale yellow, and pale red. Thus it is not so much the colors themselves that carry the symbolism, although a system can be built out of them, as it is how these colors, naturalistically defined, operate within the crucial dullness (pale, dark)/brilliance (bright, light) opposition. Moreover these two seeming oppositions are cross-cut by shared colors, albeit of different color value: yellow and red.

As a step toward a system of color I build on the Urubu distinctions in my male-female matrix, which equated red, yellow and while with men and black, blue and green with woman. Generally these colors are also correlated with values-male = good, female = bad-although there is a partial exception in green. That color fulfills both the positive female functions of nurturing fecundity and the destructive, polluting, death-dealing aspects of female sexuality. It becomes a positive category when it is opposed to blue or black, colors that can better carry the evil freight of the negative associations.

E.J. Langdon elegantly sums up this contrast when she refers to Siona *yajé* (ayahuasca) experiences:

When they speak of the state of well being, they use the term *wahí*, which implies to be alive, to be in a state of fatness, greenness in the sense of ripeness as well as color, freshness, and rawness. The term *wahí* represents the growing force of life. It is contrasted with the destructive force represented by the term *hu?ĩ*-to be dying, or by *dau*, which implies sickness, thinness, blackness or darkness and rottenness… A bad experience on *yajé* is not seeing or hearing what Is expected, but instead being plunged into blackness and silence, or the shrill singing of the insects that sing in the blackness. Menacing black spirits come and attempt to tie one up (1974:3)

Black is associated with death, the spirits of the dead, snakes, and night (Nimuendajú 1967:141-142, on the Apinayé). The realm of darkness is the home of the dangerous and excessively libidinous Forest Ogres. Thus it comes as no surprise to note that when the

rare Negroid or black man are mentioned in lowland South American myth they are portrayed as libidinous ogres who, like ogres generally, are easily fooled and who are the beck and call of woman like ambulatory serpent-phalli of primordial times (Armellada and Napolitano 1975:123, on the Warao). These associations, by the war, extend into Mesoamerica, where a related libidinous black ogre, the "Black Man of Zinacantán" (Blaffer 1972), who is a supersexed supernatural with a deadly 2-m. penis, serves as a bogey man and an agent of social control of woman, and continues into the Peruvian-Bolivian highlands (H. Buechler and J.-M. Beuchler 1971:99, 185, on the Aymara).

There are some seeming exceptions to this white = life/black = death opposition, as when Whitten (1976:36-40) notes that it is reversed among the Canelos Quichua; yet neither are pure colors in this case but represent liminal extentions of them into the contrast or chroma dimensions. Thus the black of this Quichua case is not deep black but the iridescent blue-green-black of an insect's wing; the white is not pure white but a beige or gray clay color. Also wherever other entities are shown in Canelos, Quichua mythology, such as their version of the Rainbow Serpent, the "mud boa," the correct color correspondences emerge. Thus the mud boa

is especially dangerous because it spans dimensions of death and life, in mud, clay, water, jungle and sky. Beginning in the white powerful bottom of a special lagoon, called *tsalamanga*, pallid bowl, it comes up through the water domain with its rainbow colors, exuding and symbolizing blood, and enters the forest domain, turning black when it wants to eat people. (1976:39-40)

The ends of this changing set of graduations are therefore demonstrated for the "mud boa," or *turu amarun*, whose birth is linked with white and death with black (1976:39-40).

Blue-already encountered-is associated with nocturnal spirits-who are reversed as underworld spirits often are (Nimuendajú 1967:181, on the Apinayé)-or directly with underworld ogres (Henry 1964:70-71, on the Kaingang) whose *shakti* is the iridescent blue morpho butterfly (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1975: 182, on the Turkano).

The color red is another color that shows that it is not just the inherent properties of the color but also its associations that determining its coding on the shifting male-female axis. When red is opposed to black there is not ambiguity; red is always male and

black is always female. This association is linked with the two common dye plants used for body and face painting in the lowlands: the blue-black *huito* dye of *Genipa americana* and the scarlet red dye-*urucu*-of *Bixa orellana*. *Huito* is used by women to paint their faces; their men use *urucu* (Whitten 1976:172, on the Canelos Quichua). Shavante men wear reddened earplugs during intercourse to insure that they will make their wives pregnant (Maybury-Lewis 1967:63); associate it with their martial or supernatural strength (1967:277); and link it with themselves, the sun, and "good, life-giving properties" (1967:241). The Cayapa provide the links between red, masculinity, and the jaguar by mixing the red dye *achiote* (another word for *urucu*) with jaguar fat before application to their bodies (von Hagen 1939:24). Other groups connect red = sun = upper and contrast it with lower = moon = black (Nimuendajú 1967:21, on the Apinayé).

But when the white and yellow are opposed to red, red as a color takes second place to the crucial light-dark contrast and is often linked with women, as in the Desana case, via its connection with their blood, or with the underworld (i.e., feminine) connotations. This may be because the highly laterized soils of the old alluvium of the tropical forest are rich with iron oxides and have a deep red hue.

White and yellow, on the other hand, have intrinsic analogical properties that persistently associate them with males, jaguars, and the sun. White is the color of sperm, the "white blood" of men (Crocker 1977:130, on the Bororo), as is yellow (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1971:48, on the Desana), the color of the sun and the jaguar (1971:126-127, on the Desana).

In cases where black maybe involved the sun can turn red (Goldman 1963:111, on the Cubeo). When the sun is red he is associated with the birds who fly high in the sky as his companions and who also possess bright red feathers, like the macaw and the toucan (Huxley 1956:216, on the Urubu). These same birds are in turn identified with fire (Lévi-Strauss 1969:72, on the Sherente; 92-93, on the Bororo). The Waiwai maintain these color associations while adding the opposition of black as an obscurant of the sun (Fock 1963:33). The Sharanahua (Siskind 1973:47-48) go the logical step further by directly equating black with the moon in its opposition to the light, bright colors of the sun. This contrast is significant in light of the independent association of black with females, thus showing that the color coding corresponds to the sexual coding.

If the sun can turn red so can the jaguar. When the male jaguar is opposed to females, his characteristic yellow color can become red, the color of their blood, which he sheds. Thus when the Campa were-jaguars call to women at night for them to come near so they can paint their faces red, a definite reversal, they are actually saying "We will decorate your faces red by making them bleed after we have scratched them with our claws" (Elick 1969:232).

The color codings can also correspond to the coding of the cardinal directions. The east, as the land of the sun's birth, is always associated with brilliant white, while the west, where the sun dies and where the human dead also go, is somber black, "the color of disgrace" (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1971:45, on the Desana). In the more elaborate systems such as that of the Warao priests-shamans, human practitioners are also related to this crucial axis, priest and white shaman being found in the east and the black shaman and priest being located in the west (Wilbert 1975a:164), the region of the underworld home of the dead (1975a:166). In my sketch of the cosmos (Figure 3) I places green in the south (assuming underworld connotations) and orange in the north (assuming celestial connotations), but this axis is the most variable. The Kogi, for example associate blue with the north and red with the south, keeping the east-west associations standard; yet they can be said to abide by the larger logic of the model because they cut a diagonal across the directional quadrant, dividing the blue-black side as evil from the white-red side as good (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1974:295).

Giant Anteaters Have Snaky Tongues

The emphasis on the flexibility and extensivity of the anaconda as a penis symbol sometimes finds strange analogues in the anatomic characteristics of other denizens of the forest and the savanna. One of these is the long, sticky, and probing tongue of that large and primitive South American edentate, the giant anteater (*Myrmecophaga triactyla*). This imposing animal, which is almost more trailing tail then body, is one of the largest animals in a faunal assemblage otherwise largely devoid of big forms. It possesses huge recurved claws, which the anteater, braced on its long rigid tail in an erect posture, uses to slash out at attackers. A

formidable adversary, the giant anteater can easily disembowel man or jaguar.

Surely such a strange beast would figure in the area's mythology. Indeed it does, but on a subsidiary, often trickster level. Its long, absurdly pointed snout marks this animal as a humorous figure, as in a Yarabara myth in which attention is called in a flippant manner to the anteater's mouth (Wilbert 1958:64). The anteater's elongated, constricted mouth is immovable, its mandible having become ossified into its palate during the course of the evolution of this exceptionally ancient stock. The result is a single bony tube. This is the feature emphasized by the Yarabara, who have an ogre chieftain, *Ucara*, who is transformed into the giant anteater by the sun as a punishment for his evil deeds just as other Dragon-affiliated figures acquire their unfortunate character. This association recalls the previously cited Yagua characterization of minor Forest Ogres as having serpent blowguns. There the hollow tube is the snake, but for the chieftain the hollow tube is the container for the snake, the anteater's tongue. The ogre chieftain's transformation into an anteater is done ostensibly to prevent him from giving his evil orders to his followers; "every time he intends to, his small…mouth does not let him say anything but… 'UMPF'" (1958:58). This is a useful reminder that everything in structural analysis need not be solemn.

Yet this story is more than a humorous tale told to children because the anteater is ranges with Forest Ogres and opposed to the righteous sun, a fact that strengthens my emphasis on the animal's long serpentine tongue rather than its constricted mouth. The giant anteater's tongue is regularly used to invade ant and termite nests, specifically identified by the Shipibo and others a womb symbols. Thus the tongue's snaky invasion of the nest-womb exactly parallels the anaconda's flexible entry into the wombs of women.

Once the anteater is thus analogically equated with a minor variant of the Anaconda-Dragon, but functioning in a more humorous context than the awesome and repellant anaconda is capable of, its persistent mythological enmity with the (Yellow) Jaguar becomes explicable. After all, the anaconda persistently confronts its enemy the Yellow Jaguar at every turn. The anteater and the jaguar are also enemies in nature. Thus the analogies based on anatomic form find happy correspondences on the ethnological

level. The structural congruences also cohere to this dyadic pair, for the Yellow Jaguar is the companion of the sun, the sun's "dog."

The Yarabara myth provides a history of the antagonism between the giant anteater and the Yellow Jaguar congruent with the model. According to this myth the jaguar, as helper of the sun's agent, the eagle, has eaten the sun's ogre enemy, *Ucuru*. *Ucuru*'s daughter pleads for his resuscitation; and the sun, ever benevolent and full of reviving potency, is impressed by her filial piety and grants her wish, only to have the ogre resume his cannibalistic ways. Hence, as a present punishment and a future safeguard, the sun converts *Ucara* into a giant anteater. Because of that, the Yarabara account concludes, the anteater and the jaguar are locked into an eternal enmity.

It is in this context of a humorous "just-so" story that clothes a serious structural relationship that another anteater trickster folktale from the Shipibo becomes relevant. It was casually told to me by Manuel one day in 1978 when we went down to the lake to bathe.

Why the Jaguar and the Anteater Are Enemies

One day, when the anteater and the jaguar went to bathe in a lake, the anteater challenged the jaguar to a swimming contest, saying, "I can stay underwater without breathing longer than you can." The jaguar indignantly denied the anteater's assertion and suggested that they both immerse themselves to see who could remain below the waters the longest without coming up to breathe. Both removed their *taris* ["cotton ponchos," but here metaphorically intended to mean their pelts] and stepped into the water. The anteater said, "Why don't we go under at the same time so we can time ourselves exactly"; the jaguar, agreeing, submerged. But the anteater was only tricking him and jumped out of the water. He stole the jaguar's beautiful *tari*. He put it on and ran away, leaving his old ugly one behind. When the jaguar finally surfaced, gasping for air, he discovered his loss and the fact that he had been tricked. Angry, he had to put on the old anteater's *tari* before he could chase after him. Nowadays the jaguar is really the anteater and the anteater the jaguar beneath their respective skins. That is why they fight and are enemies.

The opposition noted in this Shipibo tale is mirrored elsewhere in similar form: "The ant-eater is the opposite of a jaguar" (Lévi-Strauss 1973:63). In the Shipibo account the jaguar

assumes a dumb ogreish aspect while the anteater cuts a roguish trickster figure. This calls to mind many similar tales of seemingly dissimilar figured who confront similarly gullible jaguars. They seem dissimilar but are actually connected with the anaconda's aquatic realm. The Wayana of the former French Guiana, for example, have a folktale in which the turtle, pursued by a jaguar it has earlier tricked, persuades the jaguar it tastes better when immersed in muddy, stirred-up water. The jaguar complies, and the turtle escapes in a cloud of agitated silt (LaPoint 1978). Although the paradigmatic or narrative sequence aspects of these two tales manifestly differ in the syntagmatic or structural relationship sense, deeper parallels do emerge. In both the Shipibo and the Wayana cases, the two jaguar-opposing characters are Dragon-associated creatures: the anteater in his snakelike gustatory apparatus and the turtle in its aquatic adaptation.

In fact through the nest association earlier mentioned for the anteater and some Antillean mythical data (Arrom 1975:139) for the turtle, both are womb-associated creatures as well. The turtle actually stands for the Fish Woman daughter of the anaconda or, more specifically, for her womb. Not only is the turtle confused with a woman (in the Pané version of the Taíno myth it is a turtle and in the Pedro Mártir version, a woman), but they both emerge from the swollen injury = womb of the mortal, and hence feminine, younger (moon) brother of the Miraculous Twins (Alegoría 1978:44). In addition the turtle's round, enclosed, shell-encased body stands in an obvious "container" sense for the feminine womb, just as do baskets, string bags, gourds, and insect nests.

It is all too easy to dismiss many myths as mere Uncle Remus folktales (a folktale is a myth the investigator does not believe in), amusing tales told to children but devoid of any serious content beyond the easy answering of a child's persistent "why" with an adult's fabulous "because." Instead, oral tradition in South America is replete with instances of "just-so" stories that have been revealed to have significant mythological and cosmological content. This does not mean on the contrary that stories clearly intended to be humorous need be completely sobered up in dry academic style to be decoded adequately. The modalities serious and silly are as relevant (although I confess they have been little used) for structure analysis as more hallowed oppositions like culture/nature or higher/lower. Indeed it is precisely the decision by the narrator to convey a message in a humorous rather than a serious vein that

dictates whether the awesome anaconda will be replaced by the ungainly and preposterous anteater.

The Tapir Is Handsome Despite His Tricks

The tapir (*Tapirus americanus*) is the largest land animal in the South American jungle and is therefore a prize game animal. It also plays an important role in the mythology of the region, particularly in the mountaña. I agree with Lévi-Strauss (1973:403) in his assessment of the tapir as a combinatorial variant of the anaconda. An ethnological detail-the fact that the tapir commonly escapes from the hunter by plunging into rivers and swimming to safety-makes it a perfect symbol for bridging the gap between the terrestrial and aquatic domains. An animal with a large penis, the tapir stands for the Great Snake, which is *all* penis. Thus the tapir replaces the aquatic anaconda when the mythical action moves out of the water and onto dry land. At the same time the tapir retains all of the anaconda's mythical characteristics.

Yet just as purely phallic identification of the anaconda was too simple to encompass its full range of meaning, so too is it inadequate for the tapir. Rather, the tapir, like the anaconda, is a seducer figure (Lévi-Strauss 1969:276) that is sexually ambivalent. As the essence of uncontrolled sexuality the tapir can be either male or female. But whatever guise it assumes, the tapir represents the aggressive infringement of Nature upon Culture.

Let me now examine the transformational chain anaconda → tapir in a Sharanahua myth (Siskind 1973:138) that reverses the normal sexual identification. In this myth a male tapir inadvertently "teaches" intercourse to a human male. The tapir throws a genipa fruit into a lake in the same manner men use to attract fish to the surface so they can spear them easier, but the tapir does this to lure a pretty Snake Woman (a variant of the Fish Woman) to the surface so he can copulate with her. The human watches from hiding, gets excited at the proceedings, and resolves, with success, to emulate the tapir's actions once he has gone. Already the tapir is purely a masculine symbol and as such a competitor-like the anaconda = giant earthworm-of a man's virility. E. J. Langdon (1978) has drawn attention to the similarities of a Siona myth to this Sharanahua one. In the Siona variant the water snake becomes male and seduces a human female.

As if to further demonstrate the sexual ambiguity of these

figures, yet another Shipibo myth (myth 6) actually substitutes a tapir for the anaconda while replicating the armature of the Siona myth. In the Shipibo variant a woman who has just become a widow flees human society in grief and, like the young girl of myth4, seeks death by means of the jaguar. Rather than death or the jaguar, she encounters a tapir in the heart of the forest whom, suitably transformed, she proceeds to marry. Unlike the jaguar husband of myth 4, who was depicted as a human husband might be, bringing meat to his wife, the tapir can only supply her with feminine root crops (for manioc and other root crops = female, see Karsten 1964:79, on the Jívaro; Whitten 1976:76, on the Canelos Quichua) and by collecting dead fish of equally feminine associations.[20] The woman had brought her little son along from her previous human marriage, and the tapir places one of his large round ticks under his adopted son's nose, echoing the *rësho* ("nose pendant") that traditionally adorned Shipibo men and women. The disgusting tick substitution for the normal perforated metal *rësho* is later removed by the dead original husband's brother, the woman's brother-in-law, who searches out and rescues the tapir.

Here the tapir's tick is obviously a member of the class "bodily filth" and thus the connection between excessive sexuality and filth is again reinforced. The specific feminine aspects of this filth (menstrual blood = fish poison = feces) reappear both in the Sharanahua episode cited below, wherein the tapir uses his excrement as a fish poison, and in the concluding Arecuna instance where the tapir places her tick on her human lover as a "mark of the beast."

As the Shipibo practice the levirate the tapir is a clear competitor of the human brother-in-law of myth 6 and must therefore be killed by him. Thus in yet another form the role reversal alluded to above is repeated. As the myth reveals, the tapir was the woman's creature, for she had created the tapir-man out of the natural tapir by the power of her words and unspoken desire. Moreover he was a solicitous and libidinous servant because in addition to his generous endowment, which had originally attracted her to him, the woman's dress, which her brother-in-law disgustedly rips from her after he has murdered the tapir, is completely covered if not actually woven out of, the tapir's pubic hair. If hair is a symbol of libidinous energy for South Amerindians, *a fortiori* pubic hair.

A cognate myth from the linguistically related Sharanahua repeats many of the same themes brought up in Shipibo myth 6 but also adds the congruent symbolism of the color black, excrement, and fish poison. In addition the tapir clearly represents a terrestrial form of the boa in the body of the woman, and with the same disastrous consequences for her as in the Kagwahiv variant:

First woman went to defecate and came upon the tracks of a tapir. *Dika* (a malevolent trickster) wiped out the tracks and changed the tapir into a huge black man, who said to the woman, "Your husband is dead. I want you." At first the woman refused but then succumbed, and they copulated over and over until she became pregnant with a huge baby. The tapir-man said, "Let's go fishing…" He used his own excrement…for the fish drug…The woman left her human child at home, and when she and the tapir-man returned laden with fish, her daughter was covered with tapir-lice. The woman sat on the child's hammock, and, using his nose, her unborn tapir-baby copulated with the child. The woman's husband's younger brother killed the tapir-man. The tapir-boy at his birth split his mother open, and she died. (Siskind 1973:115)

Not only is this the same equation of the black man with the Dragon as in the Warao myth earlier; but because the tapir is male and he has to use excrement, rather then menstrual blood, as his fish poison. Although the sex of the first woman's child has changes in the mythical transformation between these two closely related cultures, in both cases the child is laden with tapir ticks. So libidinous is the tapir that even as a fetus he copulates with females. As usual the consequence of this excessive libido is that the woman loses her life when her internal penis leaves her body.

In a similar way the tapir often represents adulterous sexuality (Kracke 1979:130-131, on the Tupi-Kagwahiv). Therefore it is appropriate that portions of the tapir's body be used to test accusations of infidelity. The Culina for example have a curious flagellation ceremony in which the young boy friend of a girl is whipped with a tapir's tail. This custom is illuminated by the fact that the same ceremony can follow an accusation of adultery, when a man uses it to declare his innocence (Adams-Spell and Wood-Townsend 1975:145). How suitable that the tail of that archseducer and anticultural figure, the tapir, be used to support the cultural rules of fidelity and marriage.

Two other Shipibo mythical variants (myths 7 and 8) about

the origin of the Pleadies, Hyades, and Orion provide links to the tapir's change of sex from a libidinous male to an equally libidinous female.[21] The mediator in this transformation will be the World Tree. As already shown, the tapir is the guardian (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1975:36f., 243, on the Turkano) of that most feminine part of the Tree of Life, its engorged trunk, the womblike *fons et origo* of all aquatic life. Both Shipibo myths cast the genipa tree in the role of the World Tree. There are reasons for this ascription that go beyond the physical dissimilarities of the genipa tree with the normal World Tree, the bombax tree. These similarities focus on the genipa tree's fruits. Not only is the indelible blue-black juice of the fruit produces used to make face paint, whose designs are linked to the essence of feminine beauty and are the kind aquatic seducers like the dolphin prefer (myth 2); its dark color is suitable for feminine symbolism. In addition the globular fruit itself is a womb symbol. To make the meaning of the genipa tree even more redundantly clear, the bulbous, hanging nest of the *nacash* termite, which typically adorns the genipa tree, is explicitly stated by the Shipibo to be a womb. This is because parakeets excavate within it to lay their eggs and rear their young.

In their myths the Shipibo call the tapir the "owner" of the genipa = World Tree because of their observation of his habits of feeding off the mature genipa fruit when they fall. The seeds commonly retain their viability as they pass through the tapir's digestive tract and are deposited in his stool. Thus provided with a dose of organic fertilizer from the tapir, the seeds germinate and grow into trees far dispersed, thanks to the tapir's nomadic ways, from the site of their parent tree. This is why the tapir is the "owner" or "guardian" of the World Tree; this image of primordial fecundity has itself grown from the tapirs stool.

Two further lines of evidence reinforce the feminine qualities of the tapir when associated with the World Tree. One is the fact that when so associated the tapir is always killed in a feminine way. The human hero of myth 7 enters the tapir's body through its anus and cuts off its heart with a sharp bamboo knife. The Barasana further support this association by stressing the tapir's "openness" or "hollowness"-both feminine attributes-by having the tapir suck up people through its anus or, to reverse the process, by evacuating prodigiously (Hugh-Jones 1974-103).

When is its male guise, on the other hand, the tapir is killed (myth 6) in a masculine way; it is shot with arrows from the out-

side. Also, as a male the tapir does not "inhale" its victims through its anus but penetrates them with his penis. The River Camps have a tapir Forest Ogre who combines the tapir's formidable sexual equipment with the qualities of din to produce on such hypermasculine aspect:

Míroni the demon…makes a rumbling or moving sound. In its tapir- or equine-like form, the demon is distinguished by its huge eyes and, again, a huge penis. With this carnal weapon the demon attacks solitary men in the forest, abusing them sexually through every orifice of the body, even making new orifices. The victim dies and arises as a female míroni. (Weiss 1975:286)

In this case the sexually ambivalent tapir can change the sex of his victim, but only after the transforming effect of death.

The second line of evidence for the tapir's female connotations is that when in female guise, as in the Arecuna myth to follow, the tapir dies to become the origin of fish poison, a role performed elsewhere by females or female symbols like the frog. The female tapir becomes "civilized" by dying or being killed, whereas the male tapir "naturalizes" his prey by killing them. Finally, the second Shipibo tapir myth, myth 7, starts with the old tapir making a canoe under a tree that he later turns into the World Tree. That canoe, in turn, becomes transformed into the huge mythical cayman, thus presaging the tapir → cayman transformation of the next section.

The tapir not only is a formidable and aroused penis it is also a voracious vagina. The tapir as antisocial animal seducer pursues an equally disruptive career regardless of its sex. Thus the Arecuna (Lévi-Strauss 1969:261) cast the tapir as an *incestuous female* who raises and then copulates with a boy and decorates him, as if to objectify the ugliness of her act, with her own "beads": tapir ticks. These beads, as in the Shipibo variant, are disgustedly removed by humans once the boy is reintroduced to their society after the tapir is killed. Although always successful in seduction, the tapir, whether male or female, is never successful in marriage. Its unconstrained desire for sex drives it to its own destruction.

The Cayman Completes the Dragon

Having dealt with the interpenetration (no pun intended!) of the tapir = anaconda = fish, it is time to investigate their connec-

tion with another large, powerful, devouring reptile of the muddy, meandering rivers of the Amazon-Orinoco-Essequibo drainages: the black cayman (*Melanosuchus niger*). My thesis is that the cayman and the anaconda form an intergrading series with the piranha fish and, to a lesser degree, the tapir (Figure 10). What is really involved in this anaconda = piranha = cayman composite figure is a "Dragon" oddly reminiscent of the Dragons of the Old World, particularly those of their origin place, East Asia. A rendering of the mythological South American Dragon can be found on the Tello Obelisk (Figure 11), on eof the early chief monuments of the ancient Chavín art style of the Peruvian highlands and the coast (Roe 1974). Lathrap (1971a, 1973) has amply demonstrates the cultural connections of that art style with the tropical forest. I also use the modern ethnographic evidence to add to this ancient depiction to show that it is one of the major figures, as it merges with the anaconda and the World Tree, of the entire model.

Though the cayman is less important than the anaconda, it exceeds many of the lesser symbols in affective power. For example the black cayman was greatly feared by the Shipibo, who call it "*huiso capë*." I have accounts from my informants that in earlier times, when there were fewer firearms and consequently more *huiso capë*, the mere appearance of such a monster in a lake like the Yarinacocha was enough to call out a combined expedition of men in many canoes who would hunt it until they found it and killed it. If they did not do this, they said, the black cayman, one of the largest and most ferocious crocodilians, would surely attack the women when they were bathing. The same fear is not shown for the anaconda who, it was affirmed, only makes off with children who they splash near the canoe landing.

For backwoods groups like the Cuiva (Arcand 1974:13), whose interfluvial range lies outside the cayman's natural riverine habitat, the morphologically similar lizard can become the functional substitute for the bigger reptile in mythology. For example the Cuiva cast the lizard in the seducer role, a function the cayman more widely performs. The Sherente go one step further in this process of ecological substitution, having the *jacare* cayman develop out of a swarm of lizards rather than the reverse (Lévi-Strauss 1969:200).

In most senses, the function of the cayman in South Amerindian tropical forest mythology is identical to that of the anaconda. The cayman is placed with snakes and fish in Desana ethno-

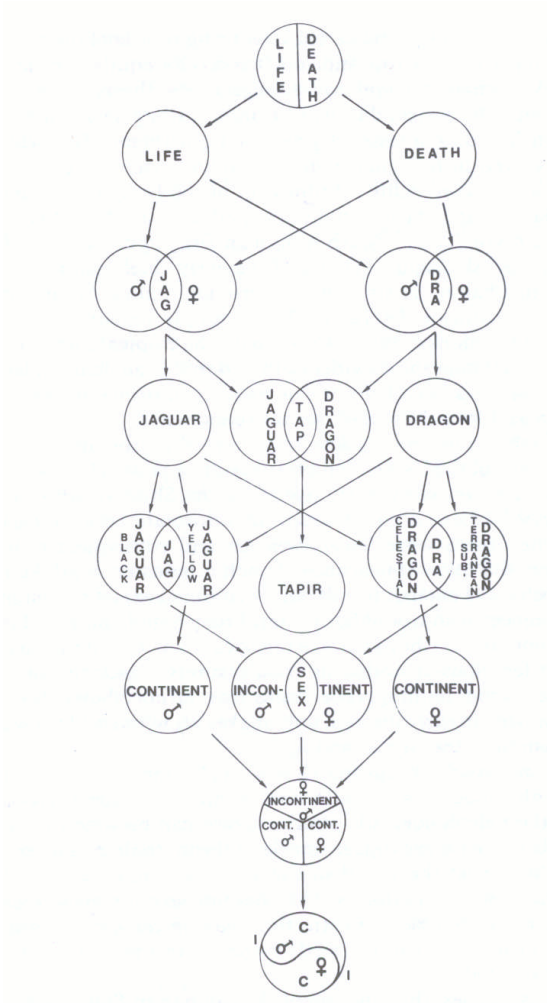


Figure 10. Overlapping Categories and Systematic Dynamism, the Major Characters.

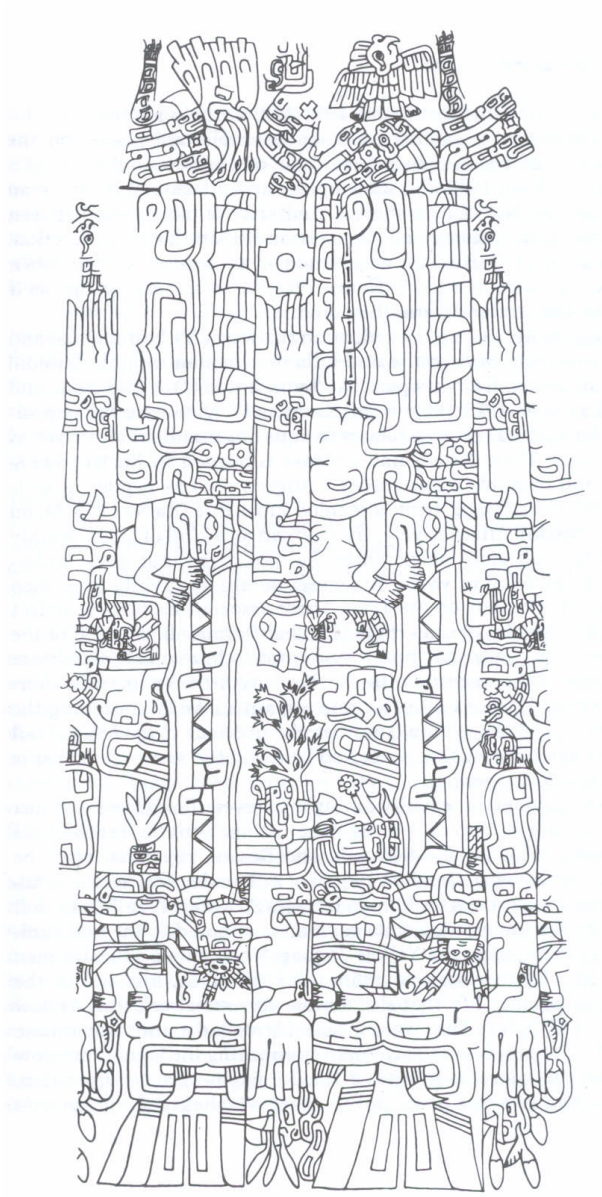


Figure 11. Chavín Dragon, the Tello Obelisk (Rowe 1967:99, fig. 6)

taxonomy (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1971:203) as it is among the Shipibo. Bracelets of cayman skin, for example, are placed on the upper arm of Yagua men as an amulet or antidote to the bite of a viper (Powlison 1977:39), showing the assimilation of the cayman with snakes. Not only is there a similarity of placement between the anaconda and cayman; there is also a similarity of function. The cayman's "principle occupation is to seduce women when they come to fetch water" (Henry 1964:72, on the Kaingang), as it was for the anaconda and the dolphin.

Typically, during the seduction the woman's human husband surprises them *in flagrante* and kills the cayman in male fashion, with an arrow, from his perch *above* in a tree (O. Villas Boas and C. Villas Boas 1973:195, on the Kamaiurá). Note here the opposition: human male = tree relates to aquatic animal male = river as high : low. Then the cayman's corpse is burned by his sorrowing lover and from his ashes sprout cultigens such as pepper, gourds (1973:195), and piqui-fruit, a manioc substitute (Basso 1973:34, on the Kalapalo). Alternatively, the cayman as a kind of canoe simply bears the cultigens, particularly the root crops that grow underground like manioc, yams, and sweet potatoes, directly to women (Riviére 1969b:260, on the Trio). These associations form a perfect parallel with the Desana myth (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1971:57) of the anaconda = canoe that bears root crops to humans. It also bears the souls of ancestors. In the Trio myth the cayman is alternately called a giant alligator and a giant snake. Maintaining the consistency of the symbolism from the previous chapters, the tail of the cayman = canoe is referred to using the same term that is used in Trio for penis.

The cayman is sexually ambiguous (even if highly sexed) just like the other big devouring-penetrating aquatic reptile, the anaconda. Whereas the Kalapalo and the Desana caymans might be male, the Canelos Quichua cayman is female. She is the soul-conferring ancestress for the human females (Whitten 1976:53). In that mal par excellence, the Yellow Jaguar, who confers souls on men (1976:53). Furthermore caymans like piranhas, are one of the forms of aquatic life that devour the terrestrial-celestial Yellow Jaguar (1976:56). The Warao case (Amellada and Napolitano 1975:113) again shows the cayman confronting the jaguar, but now because the jaguar is in its evil Black Jaguar-ogre configuration, the cayman acts as a beneficial trickster who lies to the jaguars on

behalf of some humans whom they had intended to kill, directing the ogres elsewhere. This episode is a good illustration that both a relational kinds of analysis and one based on intrinsic traits are compatible. The intrinsic characteristics dictate that the cayman will oppose the jaguar; whether the cayman will be benevolent or malevolent, however, will depend on its oppositionary context, in other words, whether the jaguar is in its yellow or black manifestation.

Generally speaking the intrinsic loading of the cayman as metaphor is toward negative connotations. The last bit of evidence for the truly "monstrous" character of the Caymanic Dragon-that this is not just an isolated set of fish, caymans, and anacondas-is the following passage I have translated from Varese's account of *Nonki* in Pajonal Campa mythology, a figure he in fact labels a Dragon (1968:125):

The waters…of the small lagoon…symbolize the origin of matter, and at the same time they are the access doors to the subterranean world where *Nonki*, the huge and monstrous serpent, symbolized in the rainbow, dwells. The lagoon is the entry way into *Nonki*'s subterranean abyss, the origin of sickness and death. (1968:130)

When Varese makes the additional point that white men, yet another noxious plague, also entered the world through the Dragon's lagoon (1968:125), most of the points I have made above are recapitulated.[22] The further connection between white people and the Dragon-that both, as obnoxious pests, are associated with spiders, scorpions, snakes, and gourds and use the latter womb symbol to change their skins and thus attain immortality while causing the mortality of others-is made in the Barasana data (Hugh-Jones 1974:250).

I have already stressed the opposition between the Dragon and my next character, the jaguar (Lévi-Strauss 1969:72, on the Sherente). The Pajonal Campa myth relates that *Nonki* was vanquished at the dawn of time in a heroic battle with a human shaman aided by a jaguar. Together, they wrested from *Nonki* the magic he held (Varese 1968:132, 135). The associations-human shaman = jaguar versus Caymanic Dragon-are also repeated in another of the Dragon's confrontations. In this case too the feminine = masculine Dragon *passively* resists while an *active* male agent steals a cultural gift from it. In the Yąnamamö myth of the origin of fire (Chagnon 1976:46), during the time before the great

flood, the cayman keeps the fire in his mouth. He is only tricked into releasing it by a bird, a male companion, who then gives it to mankind in a close parallel to the Shipibo *Yoashico* myth (myth 10). The fire really represents the sun, as Arawak myths of the Guianas (ImThurn 1883:381) and the Antilles (Arrom 1975:139) show. The following oppositions and congruences emerge from that myth-sun = bird = jaguar versus cayman = fish = moon-subterranean world of the Dragon and return to the world of light, humans, and Yellow Jaguars before beginning the ascent into the upper world and a trip through the circuit back to the underworld where I began to complete the model.

Man's Nature and Libidinous Animals in the Dry World

Yellow Jaguars Are Kindly

The major counterbalancing objective correlative to the composite Dragon of the South Amerindian cosmology the jaguar (*Panthera onca*), itself a complex and dualistic were-animal symbol.[23] Like its opposite, the jaguar is an anomalous animal because it participates in a whole set of dimensions that are otherwise contrasted. Moreover it generates affective ambivalence among the Indians who share its forest (Carneiro 1964:7, on the Amahuaca; Weiss 1975:303f., on the River Campa). It is feared and hated as a predator and competitor of man yet admired and emulated as a beautiful and fierce exemplar of male strength. The resule of both of these factors is that they jaguar is a mediating figure who functions between, and to some extent against, both the Dragon and the human character. T. Turner (1968:168) has independently stressed the same liminal (he calls it "medical") aspect of the jaguar, thus emphasizing the importance of intermediary statuses or entities along any semantic continuum anchored at either end by polar opposites. Thus the concept of transformation, how one gets from one state to another, is underlined and the structuralist method is made more dynamic and generative.

Perhaps it is because the jaguar fills so many middleman roles that its nature does not have to be split into as many parts as the Dragon's. Its versatility makes the jaguar a more unitary symbol

than the Dragon because it does not have the latter's confinement to water. That limitation alone produced the need for tapir manifestation of the Dragon to carry its symbolism onto dry land. The jaguar is one of the few big cats that loves water and frequently hunts in it. As a visible manifestation of the model's battle of the sexes, the masculine-associated jaguar kills and east the feminine-associated cayman stranded in shallow pools at the height of the dry season.

The Desana emphasize that the jaguar is an animal that lives in a number of different environments; it lives in the deepest parts of the jungle, swims in the water [and, I might add, frequently climbs the lower branches of trees to pounce upon its prey below like the African leopard, its Old World counterpart], and roams about by day and night. It is then an animal that participates in various dimensions, air, land and water, and it belongs to light as well as darkness. It has been observed, however, that the jaguar is hardly ever seen in moonlight. (Reichel-Dolmatoff)

The last fact, that it shuns the realm of the moon, *avatara* of the Dragon, proves particularly significant in the web of associations between one manifestation of the jaguar's character-that of the Yellow Jaguar-and birds, the sun, the sky, and beneficent rains.

The intermediary aspect of the jaguar is succinctly stated by Hugh-Jones for the Barasana, who "conceive of jaguars essentially as mediators both between cosmic levels of sky, earth and water and between life and death, the human and spirit worlds, nature and culture" (1974:103). For that reason I have places the jaguar near the mountains in Figure 3. The peaks o the mountains form the middle world between land and sky. At the same time their deep caves are the threshold between the land and the underworld. Although a creature of the forest-and of the human-animal opposition that entails-there is a fundamental link between human males and the largest American cat. When Crocker (1977:139, on the Bororo) speaks of the slaying of a harpy eagle and a jaguar as being the best metaphorical equivalents of taking human life because they, like people, are carnivores, he establishes a feeling of kinship that everywhere in the tropical forest mandates that neither form of life shall ever be eaten for food (Wagely 1977:70, on the Tapirapé). Given the close relationship between man and jaguar, to eat his flesh would be a tantamount to cannibalism.

This does not mean that other animals that are also carni-

vores are not related to the jaguar. Indeed many Indian groups, like the Northern Kayapó (T. Turner 1968:65), group all of them together and taboo their flesh (1968:66). Yet not all carnivores are equal. Some, to quote Orwell, are more equal than others. Thus while the Northern Kayapó lump cayman together with jaguar as both being carnivores, they still give preference to the jaguar. They only consume the flesh of jaguar, cayman, or anaconda in a ritual setting, as a focal point of the prepuberty rite of passage for boys. Even the cayman or anaconda flesh is consumed "naturally," whereas the eating of the jaguar meat causes a dance, a singularly "cultural" activity (1968:67).

In view of this close identification between man and cat, it is with the jaguar that I differ most profoundly from Lévi-Strauss's interpretations. More precisely I object to his equation of only one manifestation of the jaguar's character with the meaning of the whole figure. In a general interpretative passage he states:

The jaguar and man are polar opposites, and the contrast between them is doubly formulated in ordinary language; one eats raw meat, the other cooked meat; in particular, the jaguar eats man, but man does not eat the jaguar. The contrast is not merely absolute; it implies that between the two opposite poles there exists a relation based on a total absence of reciprocity. (Lévi-Strauss 1969:83) [24]

This is true of only one manifestation of the jaguar's character, the negative one. There is another and entirely more positive side to the jaguar's nature that ranges him in identity with and not in opposition to man. Thus Lévi-Strauss tends to see the jaguar as an opposing figure to man rather than as a similar character based on their shared carnivorous dietary patter, as I see him. It is, after all, very flattering for an otherwise physically undistinguished biped to compare himself to the largest and most powerful, ferocious, and beautiful creature of the tropical forest. Such, I will argue, is one of the bases of the man = jaguar association in jungle mythology.

It is true, as Lévi-Strauss pointed out, that the jaguar is also opposed to man in many myths. One way out of this apparent contradiction, identification yet opposition, is to postulate a dual nature for the jaguar in keeping with the dual aspects of many of the other animal symbols in the system and to test that dualism against the ethnographic record. Indeed one of the things that led me to consider dualism for many animals is the strong way the

Shipibo differentiate between the two aspects of the jaguar, one of the "dominant symbols" (V. Turner 1967:29-132) of the entire system. Based on that test, the negative, oppositionary character of the jaguar is only one aspect of his nature; the other aspect projects a close, not to say idealized, identification with men. For once one has made the crucial division of the jaguar's character into benevolent (which, using the color code, I call the "Yellow Jaguar") and the malevolent (the "Black Jaguar") aspects and concentrates on the first, the equivalences between man and beast become overwhelming (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1975). Jaguars are equated with people even in death; among the Sharanahua (Siskind 1973:174) jaguars are killed like men and not like ordinary game animals. Far from being on opposite poles, the human male sits squarely astride the middle of the jaguar's semantic range, halfway between both of its polar connotations.

Thus I have split the discussion of the jaguar into two complementary figures, the beneficent Yellow Jaguar and the maleficent Black Jaguar (these figures are capitalized like the Forest Ogre and others because these are not naturalistic species). The first is a better man; the second is a worse one. Together they bracket and thereby define the central human condition and reflect back on it the two extremes of which it is capable: altruistic good and self-centered evil.

My thesis is that the Yellow Jaguar is actually a kind of noble savage. Although he may look frightening, he always acts civilly. For example after the episode with the giant earthworm in myth 4, the heroine goes into the jungle to search for death from the jaguar whom she has heard "eats raw meat" and must therefore be a repulsive deadly ogre. Instead she meets a handsome young man dressed in a *white* cotton poncho. He is really the Yellow Jaguar in human guise, and she marries him. They live together tranquilly until one day he warns her to remove a bone that is stuck in his teeth lest the operation become painful, for, he cautions, "I may lose control of myself…and…revert to my animal self and eat you." He does in fact transform himself under the pain of the operation but does not eat her. Then the brother finds the couple, and the jaguar generously offers him some of the peccary he has brought home from the hunt. The brother repays this kindness with deceit and steals his sister, the jaguar's wife, and her two children, both boys, she has had by him. Accompanied by his jaguar kin, the were-jaguar gives chase (but only after a suitable

interval has passed) and attacks the humans in their barricaded communal hut. The humans kill many jaguars with their bows and arrows, but the jaguars kill no humans. Just as the jaguars are about to tear through the last layers of the hut's walls and have the people at their mercy, the jaguar-husband halts the attack and bargains with the humans to send out his *largest* son in exchange for the jaguars' departure. They agree; the son leaves the hut *on all fours* and joins his father. The jaguars carry the son off into the depths of the forest and from that day, the myth informs us, jaguars and humans are different creatures.

Although the jaguar is depicted as being a frightful hunter, the eater of raw flesh, he actually behaves quiet nobly throughout the entire tale. Just as in the Opayé myth Lévi-Strauss (1973:21) refers to, were in the jaguar is also noble although an animal, whereas the people, although human, are quiet savage, so too does the human brother behave badly here. He is always deceitful, watching the jaguar eat when he has promised him that he would avert his eyes, stealing the jaguar's wife and children despite the fact that the jaguar had been a good provider for them, bringing them fresh meat just as a human hunter would. Yet for his part the jaguar merely defends himself, even then with compassion. On the point of apparent victory, the jaguar persuades his kin to withdraw, almost as if he were echoing the rueful words of a similarly mistreated Opayé jaguar: "I shall leave. I do not wish you any harm. Perhaps you will remember me in years to come" (Lévi-Strauss 1969:82).

Further, there is some nice dialectical play on the human nature/animal nature conundrum in this myth. When the jaguar assumes a pleasing external human form (he is young and handsome), he actually harbors a savage internal character; yet he is always warning humans of the dire consequences lest they force him to revert to it. Thus the jaguar shows his restraint, an ability to control his animal impulses-a characteristic of interpersonal behavior much valued by the Shipibo as civilized. In contrast, when the jaguar transforms into a supposedly savage beast in his external form, he reveals a pleasing internal human character inasmuch as he always, no matter what the provocation, acts nobly.

The most common form of the jaguar has a yellow coat with dark brown quatrefoil markings that resemble spots. Thus the jaguar is associated with the colors yellow (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1971:77-78, on the Desana) and white (O. Villas Boas and C. Villas

Boas 1973:249, on the Juruna), both colors of the semen the jaguar is analogically linked with. The jaguar is a fertility figure, but one of which, being male, is coupled with a kind of sexuality voluntarily constrained within the marriage rules imposed by culture. An ethnographic detail from the Pichis Valley Campa illustrates this association as well as combining the jaguar's association with the sky, the upper = favorable, lower = unfavorable opposition: "If, however, he [the shaman] should commit incest, he will not be transformed at death into a heavenly jaguar preparatory to being taken to live 'up there' but will become a *sharoni*, an agouti, quiet low on the spiritual scale (Elick 1969:225).

As the agouti is also a partly aquatic life-form, this data points to the further significant opposition, celestial/aquatic, which is isomorphic with the other associations. In this context the jaguar only becomes female when it is associated with death, even the metaphorical death of drug taking (E. J. Langdon 1974).[25] In the context of life, especially newly emergent, vibrant life, the jaguar is male. When it is forced to die the jaguar becomes female.

This explains why at first these two identities seem to be confused in the frequent encountered myth wherein a jaguar is burned to produce cultigens (Fock 1963:41, on the Waiwai) just like its opposite, the Dragon. In reality this is not a contradiction. A closer examination reveals that now the jaguar as transformed into an *old woman* instead of the young man it was when associated with life. In the Waiwai version, an old *female* jaguar *commits suicide* by burning herself to provide better cultigens for mankind (1963:41), whereas in the Dragon version of this motif a *young male* cayman *is killed* by a *male* hunter and burned by *women*. Both figures may be involved in the transfer of cultural traits to men but as always the jaguar actively assists, even though now as a female she is doomed to eventual death (via the female = mortal equation of the model). In contrast, the Dragon passively resists and escapes with his life.

Where the jaguar originally owns fire and passed it on to men, "now only the reflection of fire could be seen in its eyes" (Lévi-Strauss 1969:67, on the Kayapó-Gorotire). The symbol of the jaguar's active male fertility and his aggression is his staring eyes and jaguars often eat the eyes of their prey (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1971:212, on the Desana). Human males, to partake of his fertility, also eat the eyes of the jaguar (Goldman 1963:222-223, on the Cubeo). As I show later, the staring eyes of the jaguar are the eyes of the sun and the eyes of the fire that the sun kindles. "The eyes of the

jaguar are thought of as glowing with a sort of inner fire: when flashlights were introduces, the Kayapó christened them 'jaguar eyes'" (T. Turner 1968:66).

Of all human males, the anomalous jaguar is most closely associated in his fertility with that anomalous man, the shaman (Siskind 1973:168, on the Sharanahua), particularly in his beneficial role as a curer or medicine man:[26]

The [Yellow] jaguar was the most important of the animals connected with the Héta curing practices. A jaguar skin was an essential part of several cures. During such a cure a patient sat or knelt on a jaguar skin while the curer fanned another skin over him…a patient's belly was rubbed with the paws of a jaguar to cure a stomach ache… Sometimes the ashes of burned jaguar skin were mixed in the *kukuai* drink and used as a cooling lotion on a patient's skin. (Kozák et al. 1979:421)

In a classic confrontation of the substances, burned jaguar skin is also rubbed on a snake bite (1979:423).

The shaman in his curing role is an intermediary between his people and the spirits he contacts on their behalf. The Tupi-Gavião (D. Moore, personal communication 1978) are typical in this respect, believing that the shaman, who had a spirit wife and son in the sky, can also travel underwater to visit the *Goñanéêc*, or water spirits, who are always having a fiesta. Thus the shaman connects all three realms of the universe in his person as does his familiar, the Yellow Jaguar. Therefore the medicine man uses tobacco as a connecting device between this world and the world of the beneficent sky spirits (Elick 1969:206-207, on the Pichis Valley Campa). A Tukano association reverses that direction by maintains the logic by having the sun, moon, and jaguar living together in the sky until the jaguar decides to descend to earth, transforming himself into *omé-mahse* ("smoke person") (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1975:127). Tobacco smoke rises in the air and thus ties the realms of land and sky together like a path (Wilbert 1972:68, on the Warao). It also opposes the entities of the maleficent opposite realm, the underworld, because it represents a "cooked" entity versus their raw nature. The Shipibo, as I have noted, believe that there are villages of people below the waters and that they abhor tobacco smoke.

Shamans transform, under the effects of psychotropic drugs, into jaguars as jaguars mutate into humans. Thus when a shaman becomes a jaguar he ripens the fruits through the emanations of

his fertility (Goldman 1963:262, on the Cubeo). The Héta have a similar association in their use of jaguar skins and a cylindrical jaguar skin hat in a rite at the harvest of the guaviroa fruit (Kozák et al. 1979:419-420). Similarly shamans increase the fertility of an animal species by having sex with the female animals of that species (Wagley 1943:629, on the Tapirapé), thus becoming a kind of Master of Animals. Because quartz crystals or cylinders are associated with jaguars, it is not surprising that such stones are identified as the shaman's jaguar familiars (Elick 1969:208-209, on the Pichis Valley Campa) or that shamans use the stones to cure (Stone 1962:43, on the Talamanca). Just as fertility causes life, the medicine man = Yellow Jaguar is opposed to any threats to life like illness and bewitchment (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1971:28, on the Desana).

Because this is a continuum logic built out of discrete contrastive parts, there should be ambiguity, but ambiguity resolvable in terms of the contrasts. For example, both the jaguar (Holmberg 1969:119, on the Sirionó; Reichel-Dolmatoff 1971:78, on the Desana) and the Dragon (Dumont 1977:206, on the Panare) are associated with thunder and rain. This seems at first like a contradiction, for if they were unitary or univocal symbols a tidier picture would have the jaguar associated with dryness and the Dragon with contrasting rain and thunder. Because these are dualistic symbols, however, the contrasts lie on other dimensions such as benevolence-malevolence. The Yellow Jaguar as kindly mediator between land and sky brings beneficially limited rains. The malevolent Dragon as mediator in two aspects between subterranean and celestial water, brings excessive and damaging rains in the form of floods (E.J. Langdon 1978, on the Siona). The water of the Dragon is destructive because it is superabundant, uncontrolled, and therefore excessive. It wells out of the ground or out of the severed trunk of the World Tree and does not fall from heaven. The rain of the jaguar (Yellow or more frequently Black), is measured and restrained by contrast. It falls like natural rain, from above to below, and does not defy gravity unnaturally like the Subaquatic Dragon's. Lévi-Strauss (1969:188) saw this contrast between the dualistic aspects of water--the one creative and celestial, the other destructive and terrestrial--yet he did not link them to the dualistic aspects of the Dragon-jaguar oppositionary dyad.

Let me now pursue the chain of consequences between the

cosmologic role of the shaman and the cosmologic role of the jaguar. Wagley (1934:624) mentions data from the Tapirapé mythology that can be summarized as follows: Upon death, the shaman = jaguar = sun = red, a sequence congruent with the Pichis Valley Campa association of the dead shaman = jaguar of the sky (Elick 1969:25). Jaguars themselves climb into the sky (O. Villas Boas and C. Villas Boas 1973:66, on the Kamaiurá) or they support the sky (1973:249, on the Juruna). As sky-linked beings, jaguars give birth to astral bodies like the sun or the moon, either directly (Murphy and Quain 1955:73-74, on the Trumaí) or through a human female intermediary (Basso 1973:11, on the Kalapalo). The structural inversion whereby the sun creates the jaguar (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1971:28, on the Desana) also occurs. Astral forms of life are allied with the terrestrial jaguar as he ascends into the sky as an intermediary acting on behalf of man. Thus the jaguar, in the form of *Sinaá* a Juruna culture hero, captures fire from the eagle (O. Villas Boas and C. Villas Boas 1973:237) and in the Shavante version gives fire to man (Maybury-Lewis 1967:284). As is the case with many of the structural oppositions cited here, when one character becomes transposed paradigmatically, the other characters also shift to maintain the contrast. Thus fire, which was originally held by an aquatic Dragon and stolen by a bird, is now held by a bird and stolen by a terrestrial jaguar.

T. Turner (1968:61c) points out in a major theoretical advance that because the fire of the jaguar is made of a red wood with blood-red sap it is really "raw fire," fire that is in an intermediary state and so cannot replenish itself. This state of the jaguar's fire mirrors the condition of his society; for although it may look like a copy of civilized human society in that there is village life, there are no jaguar cubs (the analogue of children) and thus the jaguar's society cannot replicate itself. It is not a generalized or replaceable society or culture. Hence once fire is stolen from the jaguar he must revert to a completely natural state. This is what happens in Shipibo myth 4 wherein the jaguar loses his human wife, who is his fire agent, and his sons, the continuators of that knowledge.

In light of these points, Lévi-Strauss's Culture/Nature dichotomy is too simple. Thanks to the liminality of the jaguar concept this dichotomy should be rewritten: Nature/nongeneralized Culture/Culture. T. Turner's concept of "raw fire" finds the perfect ethnographic corroboration in myth 4 wherein the jaguar, though he has access to fire through his human wife,

nevertheless prefers his meat barely singed, that is, "rare." Rare meat is, after all, intermediary between raw and cooked meat. Or, to put it into binary terms, Nature : fire eating : : liminality : fire-maintenance : : Culture : firemaking. Restated, this string is: raw : rare : : rare : cooked. The *fire eating* term from the above set is derived from the Northern Kayapó (T. Turner 1968:15a) version of the macaw "bird nester" myth wherein people bring the fire they have taken from the jaguar in the form of a burning log. Several animals, the toad, the *jacu* and *jaho* (two small game birds), ran along swallowing all the sparks that fell from the log, thus acquiring their red throats and thereby "eating" fire. This is a natural, excessive act that does not transform the nature of these animals, for that is internal; it only changes their external appearance. Inasmuch as T. Turner has already established the equivalences, eat = sex, hair = sex, it becomes significant that the animals' sexual act of "devouring" the fire affects the color of their "hair" (i.e., plumage).

The oppositions between the Dragon, in any one of his guises, and the Yellow Jaguar maintain the pattern of Dragon (anaconda) = water/jaguar = land (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1975:113, on the Desana). Thus when jaguars fall into water they are consumed by ravenous piranhas, one aspect of the Dragon (Fock 1963:63, on the Waiwai; Holmberg 1969:117-118, on the Sirionó).

Black Jaguars Are Nasty

It may seem as though I have painted an overly positive picture of the jaguar so far; it is after all a very dangerous animal. The jaguar is really a Janus-headed creature, one face smiling, the other contorted in a ferocious grimace. In the latter manifestation, that of the Black Jaguar, it significantly overlaps with the negative connotations of the Dragon, particularly in its role of underworld, feminine-associated cannibalistic ogre.

This evil reputation rests on some very sound native ethological observations. Unlike the other big cat who inhabits the jungles and sierras of South America, the retiring and inoffensive cougar or puma, the jaguar actively hunts man. He does not, like the Indian tiger, have to be old and diseased, incapable of bringing down his normal game, to settle for human meat. Kloos (1977:117) shows the alarming rates of jaguar predation on an isolated Carib-speaking band of Akuriyo hunters and gatherers: Fully one-

third of the male and three-quarters of the female violent deaths are caused by jaguars. It is true that these rates are exacerbated by Akuriyo social patterns, such as their habit of hunting and foraging alone as well as their custom of deserting sick or elderly members, but they nevertheless demonstrate the dramatic predatory potential this big cat has against humans. Similar but less detailed information has recently been published on the equally nomadic and fugitive Héta of Northwest Paraná, Brazil. If anything, these data show how equal the contest is between man and jaguar; the Héta sometimes bait jaguar traps with the bodies of dead Héta killed by the jaguar (Kozák et al. 1979:388).

Therefore the jaguar is regarded by the Indians as essentially fierce, but there are degrees of ferocity. "Black jaguars…are said to be particularly fierce, while, as we were told by the Pira-Tapuya, the common spotted kind is thought to be less dangerous" (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1975:124). There are, then, two jaguars, not one: a natural and a demoniac form, the latter having a particular taste for human flesh (Karsten 1964: 57-58, on the Canelos). Reichel-Dolmatoff presents a good account of how these two forms came to differ among themselves and in the process links the Black Jaguar with females, the moon, black paint, and spots, all in a manner congruent with the Dragon affiliations of this mythical character:

When the jaguar noticed the spots on the moon's face he went to the sky and asked: "How did you soil your face?" The moon answered: "I slept with my daughter." The jaguar told the other felines and they all went to see the daughter of the moon. At that time they were all of one color and did not have spots. The girl had prepared body paint for a dance: a black paint and a red one. The jaguar put his paw into the liquid and daubed it on his body; the black jaguar put his whole hand into it and smeared it all over his fur. The puma painted himself red, and all the others, ocelots and their kind, began to splash paint on their bodies. (1975:127, on the Tukano)

This episode parallels exactly the before-cited theme of birds bathing in the blood of the anaconda with the same consequences for greed, the Black Jaguar's uniform coloration.

In an exceptionally revealing statement the Cubeo note that the Black Jaguar's fierceness is not his own fault. As they say, "The fierceness of the jaguar is of *human* origin" (Goldman 1963:263, emphasis mine). Thus when the shaman turns into a sorcerer or a witch doctor, he is capable of unbridled ferocity (Arguedas

1976:146, 264, on the Cubeo; D. Moore, personal communication 1978, on the Tupi-Gavião; Whiffen 1915:182, on the Witoto).

It is the human-nature component of the jaguar's character that makes him fierce. Whereas the jaguar in his Yellow guise ennobles man by giving him his nature, man perverts the jaguar and turns him into a Black Jaguar by the same exchange. The Guianan Carib recognize this evil trade when they describe the transformation, of malevolent sorcerers into savage were-jaguars: "I can kill a tiger, but how shall I kill a *kenaima*-[sorcerer]-tiger?" (ImThurn 1883:349). The Shipibo recognize the same thing when they sat that in his visions a man who wishes to become a powerful sorcerer will see a huge jaguar, much bigger than life, enter his body through his anus and leave it through his mouth. When it has left his body the man will be able to cast terrible spells.

The Shipibo carefully distinguish between two types of jaguars. The Yellow Jaguar they call by the simple term *ino*, or jaguar; but the malevolent jaguar they call the *huiso inon*, or Black Jaguar (*Yanapuma* in the Quechua-derived jungle Spanish of the area). Informants maintain that the normal jaguar can turn into a person who speaks as the Shipibo do. He dresses in a beautifully decorated white *tari*, the decorations referring no doubt to his spots. He has a white skin. By this the Shipibo do not mean that the Yellow Jaguar is a white man; they simply mean that he has very light skin. White, as elsewhere, is the color associated with the ordinary jaguar. When he meets people walking down a path in the jungle, the Yellow Jaguar-man engages them in conversation. He just wants to talk with them, to practice human speech, with no intention of fooling and later harming them. There is no negative connotation of this kind of jaguar, but neither is there much awe.

This is very different from the hushed tones with which the Shipibo speak of the fearsome Black Jaguar. In contrast to the Yellow Jaguar, who is of normal size, the *Yanapuma* is gigantic. One informant drew a huge spoor in the dust of the village plaza to indicate this monster's outsized paws. As elsewhere, this giganticism is a function of the Black Jaguar's fierceness as an animal ogre. The Kamaiurá, for example, describe this ravenous jaguar ogre as being "bigger than houses" (O. Villas Boas and C. Villas Boas 1973:181), the same size they attain in the later paranoid stages of a drug-induced vision (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1975:172, on the Tukano). The Shipibo continue this emphasis on hyperbole as they describe the other characteristics of the Black Jaguar. It too,

like the Yellow Jaguar, can transform itself into human form; but unlike the benevolent one it only does so to kill people, whether directly by utilizing its physical strength or indirectly through witchcraft.

One Shipibo myth (myth 9) appropriately enough casts the Black Jaguar as a sinister white man dressed in a shiney, long, black suit coat and a white vest.[27] He first bewitches a hapless group of mestizo rubber gatherers by tasting a bit of their food, thus causing them to fall into a profound sleep, just as the dolphin seducer did to his woman victim in myth 2. He then breaks their necks with his mighty jaws and hauls them off to eat them in his cave. The *huiso inon*'s mighty roar, his din-*rique, rique, rique*-can be heard for a great distance. He travels at an immense speed, traversing long distances in an instant. He is the worst of all, they say, and his approach causes earthquakes. Fish jump out of the water, and animals and insects fall silent in terror at his approach.

The Shipibo, as do other groups like the Kauikuru (Carneiro 1978), emphasize that the Black Jaguar lives in the depths of the jungle. It dwells moreover in the center of the forest, not in the low hills but only in the deepest caves of the highest mountains. In the central Ucayali the home of the *Yanapuma*, as one informant told me from a "personal experience," is in a comparatively tall Cerros de Iparia to the east of the river. There, along a wide path so straight it looks like the roads of the white men, the Black Jaguar drags his lifeless prey.

The earthly, underground, affinities of the Black Jaguar are clearly shown in the following personal reminiscence of my Shipibo informant Lucio, wherein he describes a trip he and others made upriver, which ended prematurely in a confrontation with the ogre:

We went past the *vahuanishö* [an oxbow lake one and one-half meanders above Pucallpa]. Various people went in the dry season. We went to the *Inompapoya* [a tributary upriver near the Tamaya]. We arrived to at the mouth of the river. There we slept. Then we traveled upstream [on the tributary] until the mountains began. There, to the east, a big Black Jaguar [*huiso inon*] waits. When people arrive he tries to eat them, running very, very quickly from the direction of the mountains. Continuing on, we slept again before getting to a very deep put, or hole in the earth. During the night we listened, listened hard for there was danger. We stayed awake listening. A rumbling came from the earth that sounded like thunder-*rirririri!* Hearing the sound we listened again. Once more, but

much louder, came the sound-*rirririri!* The people began yelling. "Let's go, let's go!" they cried; "We will not [be able to] escape!" This they cried to each other. We grabbed our mosquito netting and threw it in the canoes. When the animal was very, very near we paddled furiously. The caño was very narrow and the old ones blew on the clods of earth they scooped up from the banks as we hurtled through. Escaping, they blew on the clods an threw them behind us to keep the animal from following. When it was very close we were very frightened and almost lost our senses. We fled, almost lost. The Black Jaguar was coming. We reached the mouth of the tributary. We were safe; we ate. After eating, we reached the big river [the Ucayali]. Several months after this fright happened, a woman died.

Note the presence here of a deep pit as a door to the underworld of the Black Jaguar. The fact that the underworld is aquatic and dangerous is attested to by the fact that the din of the Black Jaguar is likened to the sound of thunder. This recapitulates the curious equation of earthquakes and thunder, which the River Campa also associated with each other as deep reverberations (Weiss 1975:255), thus showing the earthly affiliations of the Black Thunder Jaguar (Lévi-Strauss 1973:190, on the Warao). The magical blowing on the clods of dirt is the same action the Shipibo still do to blow away the sounds of thunder of an approaching tempest when they are in open boats on the Ucayali. Last, note the fatal consequences of this incident for a *woman*, indicating the feminine susceptibility to this kind of ogre.

So not only do the mountains of the Black Jaguar connect the earth with the sky and thus fulfill the intermediary function of the jaguar's general character, but the deep caves within these limestone crags are analogues of the deep pools of the Dragon, doors that open to the aquatic underworld. In South America, in a manner reminiscent of the famous Olmec petroglyph Relief 1 at Chalcatzingo in Mexico (Figure 12), the mouths of caves are thought to be the mouth of that other underworld being and aspect of the Dragon, the anaconda (Hugh-Jones 1974:269, on the Barasana).

Thus Huxley, describing the Urubu view of the Village of the Jaguars, says that "This village, like the surrounding country the woman has passed through, is underground, the land of the night sun; the jaguars are thus seen as the black side of Mair's nature, for one of Mair's [the Urubu culture hero's] epithets is *Yawar-iyar*, jaguar owner" (1956:221). Whitten gives a good description of the Canelos Quichua *Amasanga*, or Black Jaguar, and its association

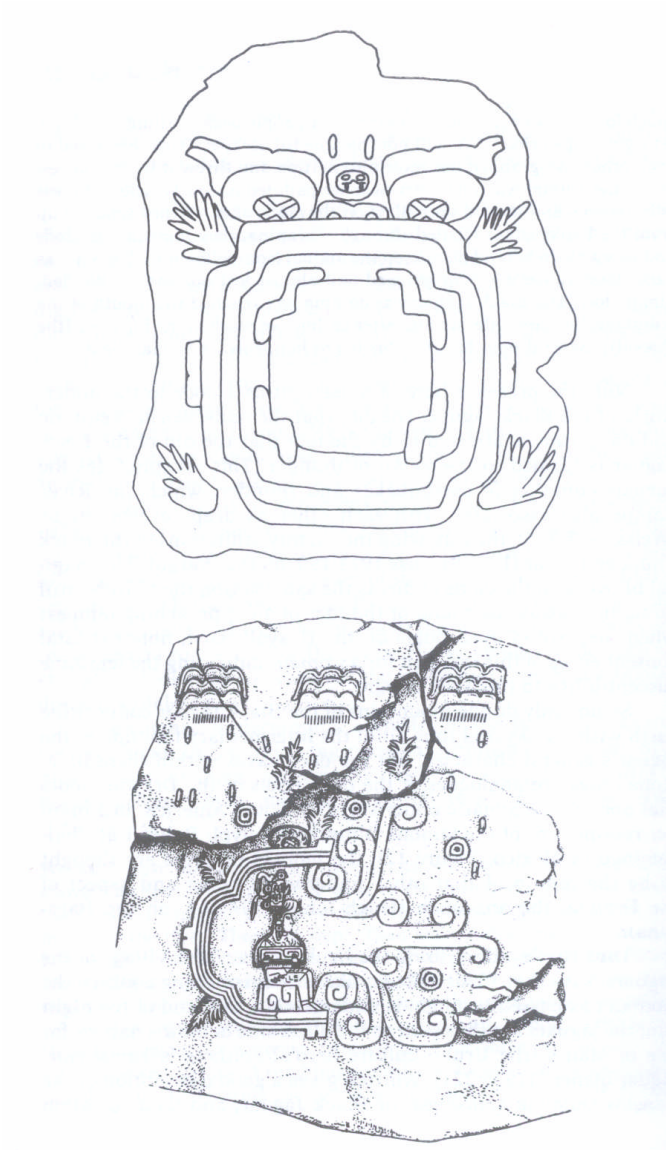


Figure 12. Olmec Rain Serpents, Chalcatzingo: (a) Profile, Relief I (Joralemon 1971:49, fig. 142) and (b) Full Face, Relief IX (Joralemon 1971:49, fig. 141)

with the underworld and dry land equivalents of the Dragon (lizard and land tortoise). Together with his wife, the earth goddess *Nunghuí,* they represent the sexually ambivalent World Tree…bringing us all the way back to the Dragon Tree:

Souls, *aya*, and spirits, *supai*, are everywhere in the forest. The soul master of the forest is *Amasanga;* he is the spirit who knows most about everything in the forest, and who oversees soul movement during Runa dreams and visions. He is male, *cari*, and wears a cloak of beautiful "black," *yana*. This is not the dull black of mourning drab, but rather the iridescent black of tropical bird feathers that ranges to brilliant blues and shimmering greens. His stool, *bancu*, is a greenish-brown lizard with red throat, *sacha runa*, another lizard known as *jayambi*, or the land tortoise, *yahuati*. *Amasanga* appears at times at dusk, as he moves into a tree for the night…His animal manifestation, the living embodiment of his continuing *aya*, is the great black jaguar, *Jatun yana puma* or *huagra puma*….Other manifestations are thunder and lightning. His wife is *Nunghuí.* He and *Nunghuí* may be collectively known as *rucu chitus*, a permanently rooted, ancient, tree trunk. (1976:37, 305a)

Further associations congruent with the model place the Black Jaguar with the cayman, boas, and monkeys in the dark subterranean = subaquatic underworld:

Hills, *urcu*, with their own jungles and rivers rise up toward the sky world, and through their caves penetrate downward into the underworld. Specific populations of *Amasangas* live under hills in territorial groupings; some even live in great cities. There, too, live the black jaguars, great caymans, and boas; monkey troops are though to abound in some of the imagined and real caves. (Whitten 1976:41)

Appropriately enough, when the jaguar is in his Yellow guise, his eyes glow with the remembrance of the fire of the sun; they become two blazing suns. When he is in his Black manifestation, however, his eyes glisten with water, they become two miniature moons, allowing him to see in the moon's domain, the night (Lévi-Strauss 1969:190, on the Cayua). I continue to follow this string of transitive relations the Black Jaguar is a part of-Black Jaguar = night = water = underground caves = females = cannibalism = moon = incest = menstrual blood = open-in the coming sections, but here let me focus on the feminine, cannibalistic connotations of the Black Jaguar. For example where females anomalously convert themselves into jaguars, they do so in connection with water, thus reinforcing the Black Jaguar = water =

female part of the sting. In a Warao myth a widowed woman, because she does not have *a male companion*, travels to a lake to bathe herself. She emerges from the pool transformed into a jaguar (Armellada and Napolitano 1975:131).

Female shamans are rare in the tropical forest, but where they are mentioned they are invariably witches or sorceresses. Such is the Shipibo opinion. Although I have witnessed several deaths and resultant funerals among the Shipibo, the most terror I have heard expressed about the ghosts the Shipibo fear, and whom they believe haunt the paths at night, was associated with the death of an old lady, and not an old man. A smiling, and I had thought charming, matriarch in life, this woman, after death, mercilessly haunted the inhabitants of her compound. According to informants she flung clods of dirt at the terrorized members of her family as they huddled inside their huts, gathered about the fires of incense Shipibo believe keep the ghosts of the recently dead at bay, especially at wakes. She appeared, fully clothed in *chitonte* and *racoti*, cold and beckoning to relatives, when they ventured on the paths. She wanted to take them with her, her survivors said. It was the consensus of opinion after a séance was held that either the old woman had been a witch herself or, natural as it had appeared to be for someone of her advanced years, her death had really been caused by sorcery.

The strong linkage between women and sorcery among the Shipibo is one also shared by the Tapirapé: "The female shamans [once rare, now extinct] were remembered as having been especially malevolent. They were supposed to dream more than men and work much harm to the people" (Wagley 1977:197). This association continues over into the jaguars. When the jaguar has a human wide it is like the Gê case, in which "it was the jaguar's human wide who showed cannibalistic tendencies" (Lévi-Strauss 1969:99, on the Toba-Pilaga, 1973:250, on the Warao) who is especially savage. In this ogre guise the cannibal Black Jaguar is, like the Forest Ogre in the next section, essentially stupid and easily duped by a whole series of human, human culture hero, and animal trickster figures (Lévi-Strauss 1973:174, on the Kalina; Powlison 1971-1972:72-74, on the Yagua).

A perfect summation of the Black Jaguar's antitheitcal character comes from the northwest Amazon and eastern Colom

bia, where it plays a much greater role than it does elsewhere in South America. There the concentration on the Woman Shaman figure is not unrelated to the Black Jaguar itself. Typically when the Black Jaguar is portrayed as a merciless ogre (Hugh-Jones 1974:261, on the Barasana), it dies consumed by piranhas (1974:294). In that case the bridge the jaguars travel over is composed of anacondas acting as lianas. When the anaconda-lianas, on signal, unravel themselves, they dump the jaguars into the water to meet their grisly end. As I mentioned earlier, the Shipibo have an analogous myth in which the first people (jaguar people?) customarily crossed over a bridge made of a single huge anaconda. One day one of their party, a menstruating woman, let fall some of her menstrual blood on the back of the anaconda, which vigorously shook itself trying to get the stain off and in the process threw all of the people off into the water, where they were consumed by piranhas.

Reichel-Dolmatoff (1975:126) makes the empirical observation that the black mutant of the jaguar seems to be unusually common in the area and perhaps this has something to do with the disproportionate importance of the Black Jaguar in the local mythology.[28] Both among the Turkano of the lowlands and the Páez and Kogi of the highlands, the Black Jaguar plays exactly the opposite role of the Yellow Jaguar. The key to understanding the Black Jaguar's role is to view it as the jaguar analogue of the Dragon. Once this transposition is made all the contradictory subsidiary associations sort themselves out into two coherent manifestations of the jaguar.

In other words, the associations of the Black Jaguar should match, point by point, the associations of the Dragon, while contrasting with the associations of the Yellow Jaguar. That appears to be the case. For instance in the northwest Amazon the Black Jaguar is described as being a fierce, cannibalistic outsider (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1975:51, on the Páez) who is the progenitor of the Thunder Jaguar. The Thunder Jaguars are voracious little creatures whose dwarfish appearance links them to the underworld, the realm of the Dragon. The underworld being aqueous, the Thunder Jaguars should and do live at the bottom of deep lakes from which they emerge, like the Dragon, to molest women sexually. The sound of thunder is this variant of the Black Jaguar's roar (1975:52, on the Páez). Further associations are also congruent with the Dragon affinities of the Thunder Jaguars; both creatures

turn into rainbows and snakes (1975:53), the bearers of disease, as is the Thunder Jaguar a bearer of disease when he is killed. He comes like that other denizen of the underworld, the moon, to devour corpses at night. His color is the underworld color, blue, and he is buried in the doorway to the underworld, a cave (1975:56, on the Kogi). Thus the Black, or Thunder, Jaguar, dweller of the blue underworld, eater of corpses, bringer of contagion, and molester of women, is opposed to the benevolent, curing, celestial, and marriage-rules-abiding Yellow Jaguar at every point.

Forest Ogres Are Stupid

The Black Jaguar is not alone living in the depths of the jungle. There are other beings who share some of his characteristics and like him exhibit ogreish traits; yet these are of human or quasi-human form. They complete the logical connection between devouring and sex. There is no better condensed symbol of the fatal connection between libidinous energy and human society than the Forest Ogre who, consumed by sex, lives alone in the heart of the forest that rings the clean-swept plaza of the *maloca* = World Tree. The World Tree, benign in its central isolation, contrasts with the negative connotations of the massed lesser trees of the peripheral forest and the gloom that reigns beneath their leafy canopy. Unlike the stereotype of a Tarzan jungle rife with sunlight and tangled vegetation, the floor of a mature tropical forest, with its triple-tiered canopy screening out nearly all of the sunlight, is nearly bare of vegetation and pervaded by gloomy darkness even during the height of the day. This is why the darkness of the virgin forest can be equated with the obscurity of the subterranean world.

The forest is both the area the subterranean realm erupts into especially during the darkness of night, and the region evil falls to from above. The Ye,cuana account of the evil forest spirits shows them being thrown there from the heavens, thus corresponding to the higher = positive, lower = negative opposition of the model:

On the lower plane of the universe, on earth, the supernatural was once neutral…Then, sun the father let three eggs of supernatural matter fall on earth. The first two eggs hatched and *Wanadi*, a mythical creature hero, and his brothers emerged. The third egg did not exactly break up but it was badly smashed and obviously imperfect. *Wanadi* looked at it and threw it away into the forest. With this second fall the egg

hatched and *Cajushawa*, full of resentment and hatred, appeared on earth and became a negative manifestation of the supernatural. Since then *Cajushawa*'s people, the demons, *odosha*, have proliferated and are to be found almost everywhere as the masters of the invisible realm on this side of the universe, e.g., on earth. On the other hand, *Wanadi*, the good expression of the supernatural, after living on earth for some time during which he was permanently fighting back *Cajushawa* and his people, left this side of the universe in the hands of *Cajushawa* and his people. The fight is now between the Ye'cuana and *odosha*. (Arvelo-Jimenez 1971:178)

I have already constructed an argument that shows that the lowest realm of the Makititare universe is the underworld, and hence these earthly events also have underworld affinities. This story also related the evil spirits of the forest to the first "imperfect" creatures of the earth before the flood when it was obscured in darkness. Thus the belief in a Forest Ogre or ogres is really a belief in the living remains of an imperfect earlier age; just as the Amazons and the Fish Women sirens endure from the female side, so the Forest Ogre is the remnant of pre-role reversal male identity. The savage implicit in the jungle manifested in an almost universal lowland belief in a bewildering array of Forest Ogres. A Kaingang mythology illustrates some of the salient features of these beings. Among the Desana:

The best-known and the most feared of these beings is the *boráro*…, commonly called *Kurupíra*, a term from the Lengua Geral. The *boráro* is described as a tall naked man with a hairy chest, short hair cut horizontally, and a huge penis. His eyes are red and glowing, and he has large curved fangs like those of a jaguar. When he attacks his victim, he roars *boráaaa-ro*, from whence his name, and it is said that this cry is like that of an enraged jaguar. The ears of the *boráro* are very large, erect, and pointing forward as if to hear better. (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1971:86)

Among the Urubu:

Anyang is one of the nastiest of the jungle spirits. It is the spirit of the dead, so that it sometimes appears as a single figure, sometimes as many, both male and female. The *Anyangs* go about perfectly naked, the males with their prepuces untied, and they have a revolting dance where they cavort in a circle, the females flapping their dugs up and down with their hands, the males doing the same to their enormous penises. Their hair comes down to their waists, and is all tangles; their skin is green, the color of

decaying corpses, and there are no bones in their bodeis. (Huxlet 1956:179-180)

Amon the Kaingang:
Of all the supernatural beings, *Yóin* is the most terrific. His head, which is very large at the top and crowned with a mop of hair which some say is red and others think is wooly like a Nergo's, has a groove down the middle…*Yoin*'s eyes are white and are provided with red lids. His head is always shaking. He has great jaws, and his neck is thick and long. His body is broad and thick and his belly flashes like a giant firefly as he flies through the sky at night. His buttocks are very narrow and widely separated, and his penis is long and his testicles large. When he walks on the ground he is like a man, but in the air his arms are pressed to his sides and his legs are tight together. He roams about, devouring men, women, and children, and his hands and mouth are red with the blood he has rubbed on them. He carries a little knife with him, and when he seizes a victim, he thrusts his bloody hand up through the anus, cuts out the heart and intestines, and devours them. (Henry 1964:70)

In a last significant association, *Yóin* used to tell man where to find that other libidinous, penetrating, or inhaling figure, the tapir (Henry 1964:71). All these figures have connections with Black Jaguars, din, hair, immodesty, excessive and deadly genitalia, the night, cannibalism, peculiar humanoid anatomy, the dead, and blood.

Whether female (Murphy and Quian 1955:73, on the Trumaí) or-more frequently-male (Wagley 1977:182, on the Tapirapé), these beings are hairy (Weiss 1975:284, on the River Campa). With disheveled locks streaming behind them and blood dripping from their bodies, they fly through the night air, they bellies flashing like fireflies (Henry 1964:146, on the Kaingang). Hair is usually a symbol of unbridled libidinous energy, either generally (Leach 1958) or specifically in South Amerindian culture (Dumont 1978b, on the Panare; Rivière 1969a:156, on the Trio). The Northern Kayapó (T. Turner 1968:34) carry this antisocial connotation of the sexual energy contained in hair to its logical conclusion by saying that those who go temporarily berserk, becoming desocialized and lapsing into the animal state in the process, do so because of the entry of animal hair into their bodies. Animal hair is directly associated with the Forest Ogre by the Tupi-Kagwahiv (Kracke 1979:126), who state that they drive men crazy and draw them into the depths of the forest.

All the Tupi-Kagwahiv malicious beings, ghosts, and wood

demons share the trait of long hair (Kracke 1978a:17). The sexual significance of that long hair comes out very clearly from the following informatns account of his dream in which he saw an *Anyang* couple making love in the jungle. They were

long-haired with a woman's hair. They were both long -haired-the woman and the man, all long-haired. His wife grabbed his prick and pulled it, to see it long. "Aí," her husband said: "Pull it more so it will get long." When she finished pulling, it was a meter long, almost an arm's length. (1978a:214)

It is interesting that the long hair is regarded as a woman's trait, recalling the lengthy locks of the Fish Woman siren. This is coupled with an obvious association of the Forest Ogre with the long ambulatory penis, the earthworm = anaconda, the possession of women before the mythical role reversal. The anaconda linkage with the Forest Ogre is reinforced by the fact that the Forest Ogre can kill like an anaconda, "in a crushing embrace which turns the flesh into a pulpy mass" (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1975:182-183, on the Tukano), as well as penetrating his victims to death.

Death and illness are associated with the overindulgence in sex that the Forest Ogre's long hair represents. Reichel-Dolmatoff illustrates this point when he speaks of the Desana opinion of the daughter of the sun: "She thought about sex so much that she became thin and ugly and lifeless" (1971:29). The Tapirapé (Wagley 1977:185) and the Pemón (Armellada and Napolitano 1975:273) share the same opinion. Therefore because the Forest Ogre is extrememly hairy = sexy = mortal, death invariably follows seduction or rape by such beings regardless of their sex (Murphy and Quain 1955:73, for female ogres; Henry 1964:146, for males).

These hairy beings accompany herds of wild peccaries (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1975:183, on the Tukano). Peccaries, or wild pigs, are everywhere symbols of human libidinous penetration of Nature into Culture (Lévi-Strauss 1969:85, on the Mundurucú). Because of the connotations of death and decay that infringement has, "a heavy evil stench pervades the air whenever the *boráro* is near" (1969:85), just as a heard of peccaries is announced in the jungle by the presence of a strong and unpleasantly musky smell. Peccaries are also subterranean symbols, come out of the ground (Nmuendajú 1967:175, on the Apinayé), and smell bad, a trait which equates them, as it does the Forest Ogres, with the spirits of the dead, who also stink (Kazák et al. 1979:417, on the Héta).

Just as peccaries are further related to din in the form of thunder or thunderbolts (Lévi-Strauss 1969:208, on the Kayapó, 209-210, on the Tenetehara and Tapirapé), so too are the Forest Ogres the producers of loud noises. *Curupir*, an Urubu Forest Ogre, thunderously announces his presence in the jungle by swinging the enormous testicles in his pendulous scrotum with great force against the buttresses of tree trunks (Huxley 1956:182), hence combining excessive sexuality with excessive noise. In a different way the River Campa *Kasónkati* ogre produces its own variety of din:

What distinguishes this category of demon is the possession of a hole in one or both knees, which it holds to its mouth and blows across to make a fearful whistling noise. The powers of this demon are such that it can whistle as it walks. (Weiss 1975:286)

This Forest Ogre's hollow knees are related to the boneless knees of other ogres, thus indicating they cannot walk properly in an independent association with lame chthonic beings.

When male, these ogres come equipped with formidable penes, which they employ as lethal instruments (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1971:86, on the Desana) to sodomize or copulate their victims to death, making new orifices where they cannot gain entry through those already provided (Weiss 1975:284, 286, on the River Campa). Interestingly enough, so blinded by their pursuit of passion are they that it has fatal consequences for them as well. Speaking of the exploits of a Tapirapé culture hero who exterminated one kind of Forest Ogre, Wagley states:

Among his other exploits, *Waré* killed the *anchunga*who had penes "as large as the trunk of a tree." Ever day they went to a pool of water and washed their genitals, saying over and over again…"I want a woman. I want a man." *Waré* made a powder of red pepper and poured it in the pool. When the *anchunga* washed their genitals, the pepper began to burn them. They cried and ran, and subsequently died (1977:183)

Pepper, as a hot, burning substance and therefore analogous to fire, is always opposed to the Dragon or any of his minor manifestations such as the ogres of this myth. The Barasana-Taiwano (T. Langon 1978) have a culture hero, who intent on stealing medicine from Poison Anaconda, put pepper in his fire, thus causing smoke that confuses the anaconda long enough for him to escape the anaconda's hut. The Barasana

(Hugh-Jones 1974:69) continue their previous association when they specify that pepper is the sun's plant, the sun, of course, being the enemy of the Dragon. Initiates, when they are still "natural" boys on their way to becoming "cultural" men, must start the Yurupari rite as cold as possible. They end it, and their own transformation, by becoming as hot as possible through eating pepper and drinking hot liquids.

Hugh-Jones (1974:105) expresses some difficulty in explaining why smoked pepper should be the agent of a boy's transformation. Here the model helps clarify matters by pointing out that smoked pepper is a redundant image of civilization. Not only is it hot and in that sense associated with the sun, the giver of fire; it is also passed through fire, the agent that makes civilization possible. In addition the smoked pepper is dried out-the condition of completely enculturated males-no longer wet like natural females. Cold is in turn associated with death (1974:130). Warmth, to be absolutely certain of the chain of symbolism, the Barasana equate with life (1974:220).

Cold food is independently associated with the underworld and Forest Ogres because they "become very annoyed should someone walk over these spots in the forest [above their lair] while eating 'cold fish or cold meat' because 'it is as if one was insulting them'" (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1975:188m on the Tukano). The Forest Ogres feel insulted because the eating of cold things asserts that these spirits pertain, as indeed they do, to the cold "raw" domain of anticulture. The Barasana (Hugh-Jones 1974:229) connect these elements by asserting that cold food = raw food. A further connection between eating raw or inadequately cooked meat and coming into contact with blood is made by the Northern Kayapó (T. Turner 1968:61b) with becoming sick or going berserk; ∴ raw = sick = berserk = desocialized. Added to the already established associations of the Forest Ogre with blood and insanity there is an indirect case for the Yagua (Powlison 1977:57) make direct. Yagua Forest Ogres eat raw food although they pretend to cook it.

Owing to the link between sex and eating (Lévi-Strauss 1969:269, on the Tupari and Cashibo; Reichel-Dolmatoff 1971:216, on the Desana, 1974:298, on the Kogi; Wagley 1977:134, on the Tapirapé), excessive and uncontrolled sex is related to incest and cannibalism (Siskind 1973:49, on the Sharanahua)[29] Ogres there

fore are not only lascivious but incestuous and cannibalistic as well. Because these traits are invariably related to foreigners (Siskind 1973:49; Weiss 1975:409-411, on the River Campa), and I have already noted the opposition *maloca*= plaza (inside), forest (outside) = foreigner, it follows that ogres as denizens of that forest share these unsavory attributes with foreigners, distant, and often mythologized tribes (Siskind 1973:50, on the Sharanahua). I have already pointed out that foreigners (in the form of the Shipibo *Pishtaka*) are hairy and cannibalistic and are often associated with white or black men; Westerners are often identified as ogres, function like them, and are used as children's bogeymen with the same word used for Forest Ogres (Kracke 1979:148-149, on the TupilKagwahiv). If the hairy ogre foreigners are other Indians, as the Yarabara regard their neighbors the Pairoa, then their chief is also the Chief of the Ogres (Wilbert 1958:62-63).

Not only are the Forest Ogres disgusting; their colors clash. They have red eyelids, eyes, or hair (Henry 1964:70-71, on the Kaingang), a color I have linked with the sun or the earth. But thanks equally to the supernatural spider monkey ogre, which I tie the Forest Ogres, in its libidinous, underworld, and hairy qualities and blue body parts, and to the fact that the daytime companions of the Forest Ogres are huge and beautiful blue morpho (*Morpho cypris*) butterflies, I can also attribute the blue color of the underworld to them. The blue morpho is congruently regarded as a demon by the River Campa (Weiss 1975:287, 490) and is redundantly identified with the feminine gourd (Hugh-Jones 1974:175) and the Fish Woman (Hugh-Jones 1974:279) by the Barasana.

The Forest Ogre therefore represents the night sun of the underworld. "It is said that the ogre can be seized only when the moon is in eclipse or is red and low in the sky" (Goldman 1963:256, on the Cubeo).[30] The Forest Ogre shows his affinity with the moon in several different ways. Not only does he cause women to bleed (menstruate = die) like the moon; he or his companion traps insects for food as the moon traps souls for nourishment. The River Campa, for example, who believe that the moon eats the souls of Campa that float into his fish trap on rivers of death, have a Forest Ogre, *Kacivoréri*, that flies through the night sky and has a smaller demon that rides on its back and helps it look for food, "constructing weirs along the rivers to trap insects attracted by [*Kacivoréri*'s] blood" (Weiss 1975:284). Similarly, Forest Ogres prowl about at night like the moon and have bats as their noctur

nal familiars (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1975:182-183, on the Tukano) and again like the moon, hide inside the rocky underworld during the day (Goldman 1963:259).

An underworld association for the Forest Ogre requires a reexamination of the simple statement that he is found within the forest. Where, precisely, within the jungle is he found? Reichel-Dolmatoff provides the basis for answering the incongruence between the Forest Ogre's residence within the forest and his affinities with the underworld when he mentions the Desana belief that "the *boráro* is said to dwell in the cliffs and hills where *Vaímahsë*, the Master of Animals, has his abode" (1975:185) and where he is linked with quartz crystals and rocky, rose-colored mountains. One can compare this to the account given by a Tukano *payé*, or shaman: "According to him, the *boráro* lives underground, beneath the small clearings in the forest" (1975:185). There he lives with dwarfish beings, the *ditá-mahsá*, who are related to the Master of Animals and the evil Black Jaguar people. Dwarfs are also characteristic of denizens of the underowrld; thus the Forest Ogre can be like the Macusi *Kenaima*, who live in the depths of the forest, only to emerge at night, and attack people (Farabee 1924:74) or the Tupi-Kagwahiv *Gwa'í*, a dwarf wood spirit with knives for hands (Fracke 1978a:17) and an equally nasty disposition. With the structural logic of inversion operating, such as underground-forest-depths creatures can either be dwarfs with giant penes or giants with huge penes and long testicles that drag alone behind them on the ground as they walk) D. Moore, personal communication 1978, on the Tupi-Gavião).

Actually, although Reichel-Dolmatoff maintains that the Forest Ogre "is not a river spirit and is not associated in any way with water" (1975:183), the model illuminates his hidden aquatic affinities because the underworld is an aquatic domain. Inasmuch as the Forest Ogre lives in the underworld yet can easily emerge onto dry land in the heart of the jungle, it is almost as if the realm of water nearly reaches the surface of the land under these inexplicable barren areas within the tropical forest. Indeed, alternatively the Forest Ogre (Demon) may live in "rock outcrops and cliffs…along the rivers" (Weiss 1975:284, on the River Campa). Support for this contention lies in the fact that all the denizens of the underworld, including the Forest Ogre, behave just like aquatic seducers: "Should a menstruating woman pass by the house of a *ditá-mahsá* would become filled with blood. The *ditá-mahsá* have a

mirror and in it they see the people who are approaching the spot" (1975:189). The images they see are upside down in this topsy-turvy underworld where everything, as if in an antiworld, is an inversion on the empirical world. "Should these people be eating, the image in the mirror will darken, and should a menstruating woman approach, the mirror will turn blood-red" (1975:189) as if to indicate the increasing progression toward Nature, from the eating of cold, uncooked foods, to menstruating females, the antithesis of Culture.

Their mirrors are not the only things "reversed" on these chthonic beings. They often have peculiar feet that are turned an unusual way. For example the Urubu Forest Ogre *Curupir* has "his feet turned round at the ankles, so that his footprints point in the direction he's just run from-a way of deceiving those who try to escape him by running away in what they think is the opposite direction." (Huxley 1956:181-182). Powlison (1977:57) adds the charming Yagua belief that the reverse-footed Forest Ogre continues his deception by always standing with his feet hidden below the fallen leaves on the forest floor so that people would not be able to see his stigmata. The Desana counterpart of this same figure, the *boráro*, has the same twisted characteristics:

His feet are large, the length of a human forearm, but they have only four toes, the little one is missing. Moreover, they are twisted in such a way that the toes face backwards and the heels forward. He does not have joints in his knees; when he falls, he has great difficulty in getting up again. (Reichel-Dolmatoff)

These boneless or "hollow" knees recall the hollow whistling knees of the River Campa Forest Ogre, thus aligning din with the cannibalism in another cross-cutting manner. The Tupi-Gavião Forest Ogres, unlike the others, can walk well, but like the rest, they do so in an inverted way. They walk vertically up the trunks of trees. Other sorts of ogres similarly reverse human postures by hooking their long chins over the rafters in a house and sleeping in a vertically hanging position (D. Moore, personal communication 1978, on the Tupi-Gavião).

Just as the Forest Ogre sallies forth from his deep pit in the underworld to punish passerbys and lead them astray in the jungle (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1975:189, on the Desana), so too do they return to the underworld at death, being trapped, like the Shipibo *Ŝhäno*

Inca, in a pit. For example the Apinayé ogre *Techware* ("Sharpened Leg"), who killed people by stabbing them with his sharpened leg bone, is killed by people who

Dug a great many deep holes along and beside the road. Then they called him again, and when he came leaping he fell into one of the holes and could not get out any more. The warriors killed him and pulled him out, but recognizing that if they let him lie he would revive, they buried him in a deep pit. (Nimuendajú 1967:176-177)

The Forest Ogre, in addition to living in the realm of the Dragon and sharing his characteristics, is associated with the Dragon's cultigens, those that grow underground in the land of rot and are prepared by a process that metonymically recalls that decay: fermentation. "According to the Tukano *payé*, every time *cashirí* beer is being prepared from fermented fruits that grow below the ground-manioc, yams, taro, and the like-a special spell must be said so that the *boráro* will not see it" (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1975:189).

The Forest Ogre is thus the Dragon's manifestation on dry land, much as the tapir is. The reader has already seen how these two figures are assimilated in a River Campa ogre. When a more humanoid aspect is needed than a tapir can project, the Forest Ogre is picked. The Forest Ogre also shares with the Black Jaguar and the evil aspect of the Master of Animals (his Master of Fish, or caymanic, guise) an aggressively antisocial animal character. This linkage is recognized when society uses the same spells against all three figures (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1975:187). The link does not stop with the cayman but also encompasses the anaconda as well. They use vipers for blowguns and can kill the anaconda itself, squeezing people and turning a "hard" man into a soft, "feminine," amorphous substance. Of course this is an inversion of the sexually penetrating death they otherwise inflict on men and women alike.

Being totally impassioned, Forest Ogres, like the Black Jaguar, are generally described as powerful but stupid (Lévi-Strauss 1969:69, on the Apinayé, 74, on the Mbayá-Guarani, 252, on the Kraho) and are easily duped by any number of weaker but brighter heroes. This connection between the loss of one's faculties and surrender to the drives of sex unites the Forest Ogre with the whole series of animal seducers I have already explored. The concept of a social contract is not, apparently, unique to Locke and

Other Western thinkers. In South America the notion is commonly held that human beings must constrain their animal desires to enjoy the fruits of living together. The problem seems to be how to reconcile oneself to the fact that man is a solitary animal condemned to live in herds. Because these societies are usually dominated by males, at least in their public aspects, and because males' animality is more easily hidden than that of the females (unlike the Melanesian men of Wogeo Island, Hogbin 1970, South American Indian men do not menstruate), men cast themselves as the pillars supporting the rules that constitute civilization (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1975:114, on the Desana). Women in this view become so many scheming Delilahs ready to sow discord among the united ranks of brothers and upset, by their constant amorous intrigues the delicate marriage systems the men have instituted. To put it bluntly, women are the archenemies of the social order. Such, however, is the force of the system's logic that it can transcend its own sexism. When the animal seducer is male, as the Forest Ogre for the most part is, it is behaving like a female and thus has the negative connotations usually applies to sexual women. Along with the other libidinous figures, the Forest Ogre, whether male or female, plays a central part in defining the hidden engine of the cosmologic system: the dynamics of sexual reproduction.

The Master of Animals Is a Dwarf

The heart of the forest is often associated with an isolated mountain or mountain range honeycombed by deep caves. There dwells a figure that partakes equally of the jaguar in both of its guises, the Forest Ogre, and the Dragon. This supernatural bridges the hitherto major opposed characters of the model, the Dragon and the Yellow Jaguar. It does so by oscillating between two contrasting poles: the priapic seducer of women and the asexual protector of animals. In the former role this figure, the Master of Animals is a linked transformation of the Forest Ogre. He willingly gives game animals to a humble petitioning human intermediary, the shaman, whereas the Forest Ogre can also insure the prolificness of game animals, but only after he is defeated by a superordinate ordinary human hunter (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1975:185, on the Tukano). The same thing holds for the Master of Forest Ogres, the Dragon, as the following Warao instance shows. There *Urupere* is

brought to bay by a human hero's dogs and, altered to human form from his devouring Dragon guise, fulfills the Master of Animals role by giving the human all his "medicines" he had used to attract deer, birds, and other game (Armellada and Napolitano 1975:134-135, on the Warao). In the Desana situation (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1971:80-81) he is associated with the minor terrestrial form of the Dragon, the lizard, which lives in the clearings beneath large rocks, flagellates menstruating women with his tail (just as the tapir's tail had similar sexual referents), and like the World Tree, shoots splinters and thorns that cause sickness.

The shaman must paint himself red to meet the Master of Animals, who is himself red (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1971:86, on the Desana), the color of parts of the Forest Ogre's body but also associated with the Yellow Jaguar. Conversely, when the Master of Animals withholds game, like the Dragon who withholds cultigens or fire, he *cannot* see red. The Waiwai Father of Peccaries cannot see his invisible game animals the shaman his painted red and, ogrelike, is thereby fooled into providing people with more game (Fock 1963:26).

The Master of Animals, like the Forest Ogre, pursues women and, like him, kills them by copulation (Armellado and Napolitano 1975:134-135, on the Warao). Furthermore the Mater of Animals is a small man, a dwarf, and is thereby linked with the underworld, whose denizens are also dwarfs (Lévi-Strauss 1973:203, on the Tacana; Wilbert 1974:8, on the Yupa). This makes sense because the Master of Animals dwells inside a cave, the entryway into the underworld. The dwarfish Master of Animals is associated with giant animals, whereas the Forest Ogre *is* a giant human *because* of his animality.

The crucial link between these two supernaturals is their mutual affinity with the Black Jaguar through the latter's underworld = cave associations. The ogres are depicted as having prominent staring eyes like the jaguar. They possess other jaguar traits like large fangs and an enraged roar (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1971:86). The Master of Animals also has jaguar affiliations. When he assumes his other dualistic persona, the benevolent protector of animals, he is associated with the similarly benevolent and fecund manifestation of the jaguar, the Yellow Jaguar. Both the Master of Animals and the Yellow Jaguar are associated with the sun (1971:212). The "good" Master of Animals is the Day, or Yellow,

Jaguar, linked to semen and the colors white and yellow. The male Forest Ogre is opposed to him in that manifestation while aligned with him in his negative manifestation.

Thus it is only when the Master of Animals is in his "bad" manifestation, often as the Master of Fish (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1975:83, on the Tukano), that we can link him with the Black Jaguar and the Forest Ogre. To use the Desana account:

He also follows women who walk alone in the forest or on the riverbanks….When the women are at a landing, he causes them to fall into a deep sleep during which he cohabits with them [shades of the dolphin, myth 2]. His victims do not realize what happens because they only dream of having sexual intercourse, but after a short time they die. At the place on the river where the act occurred, a huge quantity of fish appear shortly afterward [as the women revert to their original Fish Women selves and in the process die]. (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1971:84)

The following associations are therefore established: Yellow Jaguar = Master of Animals/Black Jaguar = Master of Fish = dolphin = Forest Ogre = Dragon. All of these figures are not separate deities; rather they are different manifestations of the same mythological figure. In structuralist terms, the Night Jaguar mediates between the Day Jaguar of land and sky and the Dragon of the aquatic underworld through the Master of Fish and the Forest Ogre. It is in this context that the mythological importance of the monkey is relevant.

Monkeys are Hairy, Humanoid, and Laughable

No only is the monkey, as a kind of Forest Ogre, hairy, humanoid, clever, and oversexed, but he is also dirty, cannibalistic, noisy, laughable, and of underworld (forest) affiliation. A triadic oppositionary scheme relates monkey to jaguar and human. If the Yellow Jaguar is man at his best, and if the Black Jaguar occupies the other pole, how can the monkey, with all of its readily perceived similarities to humans (Lévi-Strauss 1969:126-127, on the Bororo) be related to people and Forest Ogres?[31] Just as in Western culture, the monkey becomes a burlesque of the human condition, a humanoid buffoon (Nimuendajú 1967:52, on the Apinayé). If one wants to emphasize the petty aspects of human frailties, the Black Jaguar is too awesome a figure to be used, so an allied but considerably less imposing figure must be found: the monkey.[32] Of

all the monkeys, the black mantled (*Alouatta palliate*) and red (*Alouatta seniculus*) howler monkeys and related species of varied pelage produce, with their enlarged larynx in the male, the most prodigious output of sound in the forest canopy. Both Lévi-Strauss (1969:124, on the Mundurucú) and Dumont (1977:206, on the Panare, 1978b) have drawn attention to the congruence between din, or random noise, and animality, filth, and females, and they have contrasted it with music, or the ordered tones of men's sounds. Hence if the monkey will represent the negative qualities of din, only the howler monkey can be the paragon of monkeys. [33]

The noisy aspect of the howler monkey is sometimes further emphasized by aligning him with the noisiest of natural phenomena, thunder. As thunder has an underworld connotation, it is interesting to find that the Barasana see a number of aquatic aspects to the howler monkey. Not only is he identified with the phallic flutes stored underwater and representing male aquatic spirits (Hugh-Jones 1974:193); he is also identified as the Thunders who dwell beneath waterfalls. Like the similar aquatic-seducer dolphin figure of Shipibo myth 2, these Thunders put women asleep through magic (1974:288) for sexual purposes.

To make things more explicit, the further connection is made between dinn = filth in the specific context of the howler monkey: "The *guariba* or howler monkey…is a producer of filth: metaphorically, by virtue of the correlation between din and corruption, and literally, since the howler monkey is an incontinent animals which drops its excrement from the tops of trees" (Lévi-Strauss 1973:396, on the Waiwai) and actually uses it as a weapon, whether intentionally or unintentionally as part of a threat display (Hall 1963:481).

The anal continence of the sloth is widely contrasted with the anal incontinence of the howler monkey (Hugh-Jones 1974:183, on the Barasana). To the extent that the retention of excrement can be considered a "closed" quality, closed orifices being a characteristic of males, and the evacuation of excrement an "open" and therefore female quality, the sloth is a male-associated figure whereas the howler monkey is a female-associated one. This is apparently the case in myth 8 wherein the sloth has a phallic staff, like the sun, and like him uses it to dry up water when in confrontation with the aquatic cayman. Also in that myth the sloth uses as his helper a bird, birds being companions of the sun.

In contrast, all the associations of the howler monkey, or of

any monkey for that matter, are with the Dragon. An instance of this is given in Baré mythology (Armellada and Napolitano 1975:221-223) when a small monkey is shaped by a *river* spider (ally of the Dragon as part of his host of noxious insect pests) and learns to speak, imitating the din of the river's current falling over the rocks. Later, given its aquatic symbolism, this monkey is transformed into a serpent.

Particularly when the congruence of its other habits is observed, the howler monkey becomes the perfect subsidiary symbol of the funny but also faintly sinister perspective on the "fallen" component of the human character, especially when it is portrayed as a punished person (Lévi-Strauss 1973:417, on the Tupi). The fate of a person who has done something wrong, or something stupid (Shaver 1975:52, on the Campa-Nomatsiguenga), is to be turned into a monkey. An allied notion is that the monkey is a kind of failed protohuman form related to the other imperfect and doomed protocreatures of the first stages of the cosmos, the world of the dark times before the coming of the sun. Such is the Witoto notion, which in addition to relating monkeys to darkness also specifies that the first monkeys climbed up into the world through a hole from the underworld. After a time some of them developed into men while others, presumably the bad ones, remained monkeys (Farabee 1922:145, on the Witoto). The Cashibo place monkeys in a similar underworld position by having them serve as guides during the last stages of the voyage of the dead (Girard 1958:278).

The Indians of the tropics have observed that the monkey is an exceptionally libidinous creature: "It should be added here that 'monkey' is a synonym for penis" (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1971:182, on the Desana); or, "The Panare…consider monkeys as the perfect example of excessive sexual frenzy" (Dumont 1978b:5). Furthermore "the monkeys are often described as animals of bad omen; they are designated as immoral, promiscuous and adulterers" (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1971:213, on the Desana). With the last accusation the Tapirapé (Wagley 1977:135) would also agree.[34] The River Campa combine this notion of the libidinous monkey with the monkey = fallen man concept by specifying that the good spirits "do not appreciate being visited by the soul of someone still living, and will convert any such visitor into a monkey (*oshéto*), unless he shows himself to be perfect by not running after the women there" (Weiss 1975:265).

Women being usually the ones accused of these peccadilloes,

the following Carijona myth with its identification of a man who kills his adulterous wife, smokes her meat, and then calls his bundle of smoked wife-meat howler monkey flesh is singularly appropriate. Ironically the hero saves his wife by civilizing her, passing her overly naturalistic (i.e., promiscuous) body through fire and smoke, the culture-creating entities. In the act of killing her he saves her; he "cooks" the evil out:

A man had a wife who had various lovers, but refused him her sexual favors because she didn't like him. Therefore, one day the man took his wife alone into the jungle and killed her. Then he cut her into pieces and smoked her, put the pieces into a basket, and returned to the village. Near the village he put the basket down and spat several times in wide circles. Then he went to the village and told his mother-in-law that her daughter would soon come too. The old woman went out of the village and called her daughter in a loud voice, but instead of the dead daughter, the spittle answered, once from one direction, then from the other. The woman followed the calls and wandered around in the jungle for a long time. Finally she discovered the basket and found out what had happened to her daughter. She ran back to the village and informed the others. The brothers-in-law grabbed their weapons and pursued the man, who climbed on a rock, using a liana. When he arrived on top, he cut the liana and sang a song in which he described his wife as smoked meat of a howler monkey. He remained on top of the rock forever. (Schindler 1977:69)

From his vantage point *high above* the indecent hordes the Carijona mythical hero sings (i.e., makes ordered tones) of his wife's disorderly conduct.

The monkey's hairiness, to which the white men are additionally related (Dumont 1978b, on the Panare) simply confirms his libidinous qualities on another level. Foreigners, as a generally lecherous and negative category, are assimilated to monkeys (Adams-Spell and Wood-Townsend 1975:149, on the Culina). The following Canelos Quichua account of the *Juri Juri* (the monkey spirit people) illustrates this as well as the underworld cannibalistic associations of the monkeys:

This is a small though dangerous brown furry monster who has a special relationship with monkeys. Some say that the Juri Juri is the master of monkeys; others disagree. Some say it always lives nearby, under all the hills….Everyone agrees that it has two faces, and that each face is both male and female. It eats monkeys with its front face, and people with the

one in back. Understanding of the Juri Juri involves us in another concept, that of the monkey people, Machin Runa. All monkeys are thought to have human souls. Any outside man accepted into Canelos Quichua culture, whether by marriage or not, is regarded as having an ancient monkey soul. (Whitten 1976:41)

This statement on the complex dualistic symbolism of the monkey-the relationship of (a) affinity between monkeys and humans, (b) the equation of hairiness with dwarf underworld status, and (c) the identification of such simian characteristics with the ancient time before the present differentiation of man from beast-recapitulates most of the points I have raised above. The Canelos Quichua have borrowed the old Colombian custom of smoking and stuffing the body of vanquished enemies and have transferred it to monkey substitutes. In doing so they oddly recall the civilizing = killing → smoking theme of the above-cited Carijona myth.

The most successful hunters hang blackened monkeys from the center pole and make fun of them, abusing the acquired souls believed to remain in the area of the charred, smoked bodies. Other men join in, and otherwise treat the meat of souls of the souls of the killed *machin runa* with the opposite of normal respect. This is not the meat given by *Amasanga*, but the bodies and souls of foreign people taken from the *Juri Juri*. (Whitten 1976:178)

In this case the humor of the monkey is turned back upon it and it is treated with the "inverted" respect, or mockery, suitable for a resident of the foreign underworld realm who threatens the stability of human society by immodestly "aping" it. Further associations also correspond to what I have established here; the Tupari believe that "in respect to indecency the…monkey is on the same level as the tapir" (Lévi-Strauss 1969:266).[35]

Dogs Are Pet Jaguars

This analysis of the monkey as a despised humanoid invites comparison with the dog as a well-regarded (if not always well-treated) human companion. Both animal symbols are used to extend the meaning of traditional mythology under the impact of culture change. I concur with Drummond's (1977:856) disagreement with Da Matta (1971), who believed that native myths are replaced by nonanalogous "anti-myths" when rapid culture

change occurs. As provocative as that thesis is, both Drummond and I tend to see myth altering its character by drawing on its own internal resources to resolve and explain the challenge of new conditions, assimilating alien elements in the process, rather than being thrown out by its fabricators in favor of radically different constructs. Yet I go one step further than Drummond; I see myth not only using old props like characters and episodes to explain the new but choosing those elements *according to the dictates of the model.*

Drummond cites two Arawak myths: one of the Monkey Woman whose marriage to an Indian man ends unsuccessfully because of his laughing at the unintentionally funny antics of his simian affines despite his wife's injunction not to do so, the other—about the Dog Spirit People—in which a White Dog Woman has a successful marriage with an Indian man. I have already pointed out that monkeys, as "fallen people," are despised and hence could never be regarded as successful affines by men. For that reason alone the monkey = human marriage was doomed to failure. Neither could the Monkey Woman, as an animal seducer figure, have a successful human marriage, judging from the tapir's earlier fate. When one adds the ethnographic fact that the dog as a human dependent is a uniquely linked with the jaguar, often by being called by a term using the same root (Harner 1973:63, on the Jívaro; Kracke 1978a:181, on the Tupi-Kagwahiv; Lévi-Strauss 1973:91, on the Tupi) or by having the claws of a dead jaguar ogress used to make its collars (Lévi-Strauss 1969:100, on the Toba-Pilaga), one can see, in contrast to the monkey, the close positive association between man, dog, and jaguar.[36] After all what other animal besides the dog is there in the South American tropical forest that is four-legged and furry and has a long tail and sharp canine teeth like the jaguar? The circle of associations between dog and jaguar closes when it is noted that the jaguar is called the shaman's dog (Goldman 1963:263, on the Cubeo) when the shaman uses his positive, or Yellow Jaguar, mode of curing sickness.

The dog, as friend and agent of man and culture her alike, opposes man's and the Yellow Jaguar's chief enemy, the Dragon, at every turn. For instance, two pet hunting dogs of the miraculous twins kill the Old (Frog) Witch who had kept the twins in a cage to fatten them prior to "devouring" them. The dogs cause her to fall into a pot of boiling water (Powlison 1974:109, on the Yagua) in yet another instance, like that of the Carijona Howler Monkey Woman,

of animality being "cooked" out of the excessively naturalistic figure. The dogs attack the devouring oral apparatus of the Dragon in a Warao myth. There the human hero has his two dogs (one of them called *Leon* = jaguar) attack the *tongue* of the approaching *Urupere* monster just as they attack the libidinous Forest Ogre-like black men of another Warao account (Armellada and Napolitano 1975:125, 133).

The white color of the White Dog Woman is but another color associated with the yellow, or benevolent, manifestation of the jaguar. Thus in the Arawak myth the White Dog is a combinatorial variant of the Yellow Jaguar. Therefore she is a perfectly good candidate for a successful human marriage partner. After all, many groups trace their origins to the mating of an ancestral woman with a jaguar in an inversion of the Arawak account. All of these congruences between the model's definition of the meaning of certain animals and their definition in the two myths do not, of course, negate Drummond's sociologic equation of the White Dog Woman with a Caucasian female, thus showing a case of mythical hypergamy on the part of the Indian man. They do, however, show that if such a meaning was intended on the level of the myth's sociologic schema (Lévi-Strauss 1967:17), there were sound preexistent reasons on the level of the myth's structural schema for the oppositions and congruences chosen and for the success or failure of each. If myth does not abandon its resources in adapting to culture change, neither does it abandon its logic.

Having progressed through the dog-monkey opposition, it is time to resolve the monkey's character in terms of its identification with both the Forest Ogre and the Black (or Night) Jaguar. The character facilitating this is the important Urubu supernatural, Aé. Aé is also a perfect mediator between the ogre and the Master of Animals because he has red eyes and red hair but blue bones and a blue penis. Aé comes out only when the full moon (i.e., night sun) is at the zenith (or at the nadir through the reversal of spatial relations that the falling of night brings). I have already identified *Mair*, the Urubu culture hero, with the Yellow Jaguar and the sun. Thus the model is congruent with Huxley's analysis of the figure of Aé: "Aé, who is the guardian and inhabitant of the female underworld, is the night sun, *Mair* in reverse. He could well be *Mair* himself, but only if he were turned inside out and made to show the celestial blue of which his bones are made" (1956:233). The concept of turning inside out—of the world inverting itself through a

play of mirrors—is essential to an explication of the dualistic ambiguity of the two major celestial components of the model, the sun and the moon; it leads now into the airy world.

The Birds and Other Denizens of the Airy World

The Sun and Moon Are Ambiguous Twins

Leaving the terrestrial world and its inhabitants, one immediately confronts an anomaly: One of the two most important celestial bodies—the moon—keeps changing its sex. Often the sun is depicted as masculine and the moon as feminine (Wistrand-Robinson 1977:134, on the Cashibo). In some cases they are brother and sister; in other cases, through an act of cosmic incest, they are also husband and wife or as the Tupi-Gavião conceive it, mother (moon) and son (sun) (D. Moore, personal communication 1978).[37] When the moon does change its sex and becomes a male, a new female must replace the moon. Usually that female is Venus, the Evening Star, and she becomes the sister-wife of either or both masculine astral bodies. For reasons I specify later, the sun never changes sex or identity. When both the sun and the moon are masculine, the common way to distinguish them—inasmuch as there is the same mythical reluctance as Leach (1976) has pointed out elsewhere for two powerful figures to be exactly equivalent—is to represent the sun as the elder brother of the moon.

In the few cases where the chronological position of elder-younger status is reversed, as among the Barasana (Hugh-Jones 1974:222) where the sun is anomalously younger and the moon elder, it is clear that a merely temporary role reversal is at work as it was in the related instance of the first mythical women. "In the beginning, the moon was effectively the sun for it was he who had the power of both heat and bright light," but the moon was still evil as he is elsewhere. He "threatened to abuse these powers by drying up the wombs of women." His younger brother, the sun, then rectifies the situation, as he always has to do, and thereby regains his proper ascendancy by diminishing the light of the moon and banishing him to the night. The later Barasana accounts present all the "correct" associations for, "the Barasana say that the moon is *ake hakü*, water father, and that when he came down to earth it became very cold, and rain blotted out the sun" (1974:223),

thus showing that after his reversal the moon is responsible for the wetness of women. Moreover he is the committer of incest with his sister (1974:240), a completely typical role. In another myth the moon, now the appropriate younger brother, the user of fish, the stupid one, is turned into Death in the underworld by his more intelligent, immortal, and rightfully exasperated elder brother, the sun (1974:224).

The River Campa perform a structural inversion on his set by anomalously regarding the moon as the *father* of the sun rather than the son, younger brother, or sister-spouse of the sun (Weiss 1975:268). The Yagua do the same (Powlison 1977:56) in reversing the sun's position, he being said by them to be the son of the male moon and his sister. The other correlations of the sun and moon still hold as they did in the previously "anomalous" instances, for the Yagua moon is also the committer of incest and each celestial body uses its appropriate "weapons" in battles with each other at the time of an eclipse:

The eclipses are the result of battles between the moon and his son, the sun. The moon fights with water and the sun with fire. If the moon would be successful in extinguishing the sun, it would be the end of the yuman race since they would [have to] live in constant darkness. (Powlison 1977:64, trans. mine)

If the reversal of the relative ages of the sun and moon are not much of a structural problem, being a simple inversion without further consequences, what of the more difficult apparent contradiction of a moon who is either a younger brother or a female? Actually, even though the sex of the moon may be male, if all of his attributes and associations are the same as if "he" were a "she," then the moon can still be regarded as a kind of "honorary female," or at least as a male tainted by his close association with females—a kind of cosmic transvestite.

The real problem, then, is to account for the sexual ambiguity of the moon. Why the female connotations of the moon, even when it is in its masculine guise? In keeping with the rest of the analysis let me start with the simple observational qualities, the raw stuff of manifest mythical analogy, that may have triggered these associations and inversions and then proceed to the logic of oppositions and correlations through which they play themselves out.

There is one conspicuous difference between the sun and the moon. While the sun remains relatively constant, shining in full

force with a brightness only slightly diminished in the tropics by varying weather and seasonal conditions, the moon waxes and wanes constantly. If, as I have suggested, the key to the feminine role is its equation with death and decay, aspects of mutability, because of its role in birth, which, after all, has the melancholy result of making death inevitable, then the astral body that appears to grow, reach full maturity, and then diminish will metonymically replicate the female condition. Therefore such a body will be related to females as indeed the moon is. The moon is not just a kind of nocturnal sun, for only the *full moon* can be considered a complete equivalent of the sun, and even that equivalent is fleeting. Rather, when the moon waxes and wanes it is an inverted sun, an antisun, a feminine sun. It is true that the sun also appears to grow old and die, but it repeats this cycle on a daily basis and in an unchanging manner, unlike the moon whose longer periodicity is based on fluctuation. Moreover the sun's daily "aging" is blamed on the moon or its associated females.

The Botocudo (Nimuendajú 1946b:110) solve this problem of the moon's fluctuation by having it change its sex while it waxes and wanes. The Canelos Quichua do the same thing, regarding the young, "green" or unripe moon (*Llullu Quilla*) as a prepubescent female, the "ripe" full moon (*Pucushca Quilla*) as a strong and adult male ready to engage in incest (Whitten 1976:56).

Otherwise the cyclic change of the moon versus the constancy of the sun is perfectly recapitulated in the Magical Twins myth of South America. In this extremely common myth the elder brother, who is always identified with the sun, is pictured as eternal and intelligent, whereas his younger brother, the moon, is both stupid and highly mortal. Through his stupidity the moon keeps dying and being reborn again, just as the moon waxes and wanes in reality. This process can be seen in the foolhardy behavior of the younger brother (a moon analogue) in Shipibo myth 8. Although in that myth he only loses his leg and not his life, the elder brother (a sun analogue) still has to reconstruct him as he has to do to his dead brother in other mythical contexts.

What are the systemic reasons for the alternating sex of the moon, that is, the ones that stem from the model itself rather than from the observed reality just discussed, and how do they map onto those actual observational characteristics? The first reason has to do with the moon's involvement with sexuality. The moon is a seducer, and seducers are always identified with females and the

intrusion of Nature into Culture that the act of seduction brings. The apparent confusion of the moon's sex is therefore not a confusion at all but the complex playing out of each dualistic figure's meaning when they overlap as semantic categories. There are four classes of male and female; not just two, and they overlap in the manner shown in Figure 13 to produce a triad of sexualities. One class is the pure male who has no carnal involvement with the pure female on the other end of the spectrum. In the middle are male and female seducer figures who are sexually involved with each other and thus begin to partake of a portion of the opposite sex's character. The two figure in the center, like the anaconda with whom they are largely congruent, become anomalous being who frequently mutate into their opposite.

The sun is masculine and fertilizing. For example an old childless woman in a Piaroa myth (Wilbert 1966:66-71) pleads with the sun for fertility so that she can bear children and repopulate the world after the disastrous world flood.[38] The sun grants her request. Yet paradoxically for a fertility figure, the sun has a small penis symbolic of his respect for the constrained sexuality of the marriage rules (Huxley 1956:160, on the Urubu). This is contrasted with the Dragon, who is *all* penis, and his various *avataras* like the

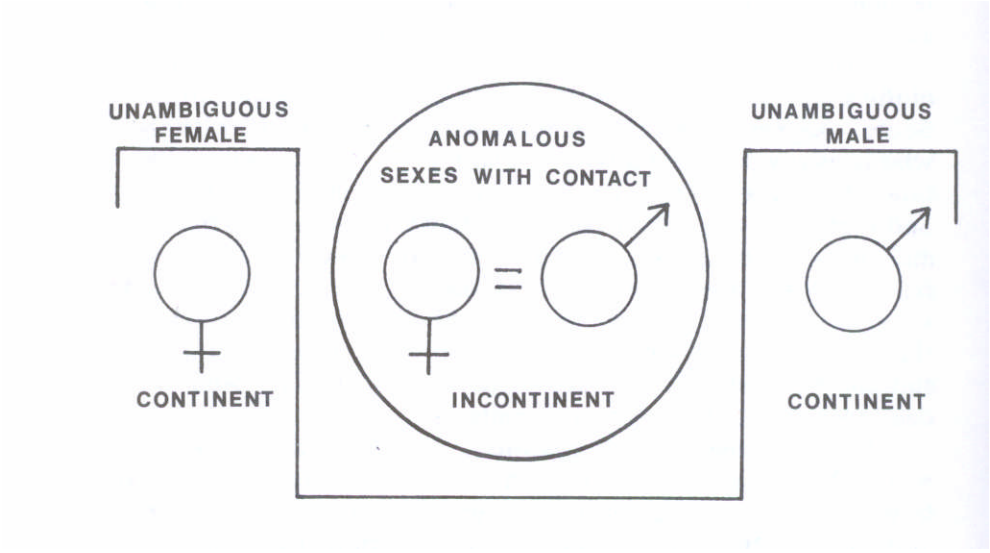


Figure 13. Triad of Sexualities

Forest Ogre and the tapir, who possess huge penes symbolic of unconstrained sexuality manifest in breaches of the marriage rules such as incest (Goldman 1963:182, on the Cubeo; Huxley 1956:160). The moon also has a huge penis; in fact it is the anaconda. The Barasana, for example, point out that the sky-day anaconda lives in the roof of the moon's house (Hugh-Jones 1974:260). The River Campa apparently do the same thing, for they have the long, transparent, and subterranean-subaquatic phallus of the moon play an identical role[39] (Weiss 1975:376-377) to that performed by the Shipibo giant earthworm of myth 4 and the anaconda of myth 5.

Related to the theme of incest the River Campa material broached, another systemic reason for the moon sometimes being male and other times female is that the moon has a dappled appearance and the sun does not. The moon's spots give it the appearance of being soiled with filth. Filth is also identified with females through menstruation; and many groups, like the Shipibo, have noticed the synchronization of the female cycle with the lunar progression. The Shipibo call the time of a woman's period "the bad time of the moon." Just as menstruation indicates the open orifices of the female, so too is the moon, who caused that menstruation, "open": "The moon, they say, has such big teeth that he is unable to shut his mouth" (Hugh-Jones 1974:184, on the Barasana). The moon is also associated with "open" and female foods like honey: "It is thought that it is better to obtain honey during certain phases of the moon" (Powlison 1977:35, on the Yagua, trans. mine).

Based on these associations, the moon can be: a menstruating female, a male who has caused the menstruation of females (Karsten 1964:130, on the Jívaro), a male who cohabits with menstruating females (Nimuendajú 1967:138, on the Apinaye), or a female who happens to also be the moon's daughter (Barral 1960:66-67, on the Warao). Confirming the moon's association with the onset of menstruation, a merging of two versions of the same River Campa myth has the moon dismantling the menarche hut of his niece-wife (Weiss 1975:370) thus relating the incest theme to menstruation. Let me illustrate the above points by reproducing five myths that show the internal consistencies that underlie the moon's change of sex, beginning with two in which the moon is a female and ending with three in which it is a male.

Myth A

A woman's cotton plantation was pillaged every night. Her husband caught the thieves: they were two celestial sisters, the moon and the morning star. The man fell in love with the moon, who was very pretty, but she rejected him and advised him to make advances to her sister. Finally, she yielded, but she urged upon the man that, before he slept with her, he should weave a large basket. During copulation the man's penis became tremendously long, to such an extent that its owner had to put it in the basket, where it coiled up like a snake, and even protruded over the edge. Carrying his load, the man returned to the village and related what had happened to him. At night, his penis came out of its basket and wandered off in search of women, with whom it copulated. Everyone was very frightened and one Indian, whose daughter had been attacked, mounted guard. When he saw the penis coming into his hut, he cut off the end, which changed into a snake. The man with the long penis died, and the snake became the mother of the termites which can be heard whistling today.[40] (Lévi-Strauss 1973:207, on the Tacana)

Myth B

The sun, I was told, slapped his sister [the moon] full in the face because of her adulterous behavior. His hand was wet with genipap [genipa], thus the marks on the face of the moon. *Anchopeteri* [the Tapirapé culture hero] could not at first have intercourse with his moon wife. She had a piranha fish in her vagina with fish poison which the Tapirapé use to kill fish in pools and streams. He was still afraid, so *Anchopeteri* asked a monkey to have intercourse with her. Only afterwards, when he knew that the piranha fish was dead, did *Anchopeteri* have sexual relations with his wife. (Wagley 1977:179, on the Tapirapé)

Myth C

Sun and moon were brothers, and the daughter of the moon was living on this earth. At night the moon descended and committed incest with her. The girl had prepared black body paint in a bowl, and one night, when her lover came, she put her hand covered with wet paint on his face, in order to identify him later. Shortly afterward she left the *maloca* and saw the moon, his face covered with the imprint of her strained hand. Ever since the moon has hidden his face out of shame, for three nights each month. (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1975:127, on the Tukano)

Myth D

In the beginning of time, long before mankind had been created, the Sun Father, his brother the moon, and the sun's daughter, a bright star, lived together, alone, in the sky. Both fell in love with the girl, and while the Sun Father lived openly with her in an incestuous union, the moon only visited her furtively as a celestial incubus whom she mistook for her father and lover. Once, when the moon asked for her favors while she was menstruating, she pushed him away with her bloodstained hand, and ever since the moon's pale face has been marred with dark spots. (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1975:137, on the Tukano).

Myth E

Two brothers lived with their sister in an abandoned hut. One of them fell in love with the young girl; he lay with her every night without letting her know who he was. The older brother discovered that his sister was pregnant, and commanded her to rub the face of her nocturnal visitor with genipa juice. When the guilty brother realized that the stains betrayed him, he fled up into the sky with his sister. But after arriving there, they quarreled, the man gave the woman a push, and she fell like a meteor and landed on the earth *very noisily*; she turned into a tapir, while the incestuous brother, who had remained in the sky, became the moon. The older brother summoned the warriors and ordered them to shoot arrows at the moon and kill it. Only the armadillo succeeded in wounding it. The moon's blood was of all colors, and men and women were bespattered with it as it streamed earthward. The women wiped themselves with an upward movement, so they came under the moon's influence. The men, however, wiped themselves clean with a downward movement. The birds bathed in the different colored pools, and each species thus acquired its characteristic plumage. (Lévi-Strauss 1969:312, on the Shipaya, emphasis mine)

The most obvious contrast among these five myths is that the first four project action from heaven to earth whereas the fifth reverses the process. Otherwise, the imagery is remarkably similar despite the moon's change of sex. In myth A the male seducer of the moon is changed by her action into a phallic snake, which in turn becomes the origin of *noisy* obnoxious insect pests.[41] In myth B the sun's sister, the moon, has committed adultery and is marked on her face exactly as the male moon in myth C is marked by his daughter as he commits incest with her.[42] This myth presents a chain of associations—moon = female = adulterer = water =

monkey = sex—all of which are also associated in the model as is the equation of the female moon with the Fish Woman and the *vagina dentata* motif.

In myth C the moon becomes the younger brother who is clandestinely committing incest with his now earthbound sister. She marks his face, thus causing him to hide it in shame. In myth D the moon remains a younger brother, but now the woman is a bright star (probably Venus). She is the daughter of the moon's elder brother, the sun. Once again the moon is the furtive committer of incest, his face marked by his niece's bloodstained hands. In this act the moon's spots are for the first time linked with menstruation. In myth E the younger brother, again the moon, also has a stained face. His sister falls to earth *noisily*, repeating the din = filth equation of the first myth. Meteors are evil, as is the rainbow, and are associated with subaquatic demons (Nimuendajú 1967:184, on the Apinayé), thus emphasizing their connections with the Dragon. Hence it is appropriate that the meteor-girl turns into a tapir—that aspect of the Dragon—when she hits the earth. Owing to the alteration of the moon's sex, myth E exactly reverses an incident in myth A wherein a female turned a male into a seducer; now a male does the same for a female by converting her into a tapir. As if to reinforce this association birds bathe in the blood of the moon just as they bathed in the blood of the anaconda in other myths. The Warao add the congruent association that the birds bathe in the hymenal blood of a virgin (Wilbert 1966:131), which is none other than the Wooden Bridge (Armellada and Napolitano 1975:82-85, on the Warao).[43] Women are left, as the myth ends, under the authority of the moon whose blood is, after all, their blood.

The Shipibo have a parallel myth in myth 10 wherein *Ŝhäno Inca*, all of whose attributes link him to the moon, also provides the blood the birds bathe in after he blunders, ogrelike, into a pit trap in the earth. The intelligence of the sun, the Good Inca of Shipibo mythology, bringer of all the gifts of man's culture, can be contrasted with the stupidity of the moon, *Ŝhäno Inca*, who withholds the same gifts from man and earns mortality for his stinginess. In turn this contrast between mortality and immortality can be related to the difference in age and sex (*Ŝhäno Inca's* daughter) these figures are associated with.

In other words the opposition younger-older may be congruent with the opposition dumber-smarter when the opposition female-male is related to them. To the extent that men appear first

in the myths of origin, such as the Fish Woman cycle, and women in their naturalistic form later, men can be related to the elder member of the set and women, the younger. Now that they have the secrets of civilization, which they have stolen by craft from the women who originally owned them, the men can also be mapped onto the smarter slots, women onto the dumber ones, of the oppositionary pairs. Thus men : women :: elder brother : younger brother, or restated, elder brother : sun :: younger brother : moon.

The moon is swallowed by a giant fish (read *Dragon*), whereas the sun opposes fish (Murphy and Quain 1955:72, on the Trumaí; O. Villas Boas and C. Villas Boas 1973:162, on the Kamaiurá), moon = mortal/sun = immortal : sun: moon :: life:death (Huxley 1956:217, on the Urubu). The moon is always passively destroyed, whereas the sun actively creates (O. Villas Boas and C. Villas Boas 1973:162, on the Kamaiurá). The moon is ugly (Lévi-Strauss 1973:208, on the Mataco), whereas the sun is handsome, tall, straight, and light-skinned (Nimuendajú 1967:136, on the Apinayé). The moon is dull because his face is covered with ashes, his head heaped with excrement. The sun's visage, in contrast, is unblemished. Not only is the sun handsome and the moon ugly; when jointly creating the first humans, all the people the sun creates are comely and unmarked, whereas those the moon creates are ugly and afflicted with blindness and lameness (Nimuendajú 1967:164, on the Apinayé). Here lameness is again associated with the moon's chthonic progeny.

In addition to the moon's association with incest, adultery, and polluting menstrual blood, the moon is linked to other forms of filth, like vomit (Huxley 1956:164-165, on the Urubu) and rotten eggs (Lévi-Strauss 1973:434, on the Makiritare). The moon visits cemeteries to open graves (Goldman 1963:180, on the Cubeo) and commit necrophagia by eating the corpses (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1971:72, on the Desana), just as it eats the souls of children (Chagnon 1976:47, on the Yąnomamö). The River Campa moon is also a cannibal. He was forced to flee to the sky after having killed, ogrelike, other Campa and consumed their bodies. This "devouring" character of the moon also provides the River Campa with a novel but effective explanation of the moon's waxing and waning: "The waxing of the moon is the filling of the belly of the moon with dead Campas…formerly he had a fish screen…on the Tambo [River]…where he caught the Campa dead as they floated down-

river…The moon now has his fish screen on the Milky Way" (Weiss 1975:268), which generally also has Dragon affinities like rainbows and meteors. The web of symbolism is completed when it is further specified, as the Barasana do (Hugh-Jones 1974:257), that the moon eats the bones of dead men who made love to menstruating women when they were alive. Against this aberrant culinary behavior of the moon, the sun eats like people; he consumes fish and game and is associated with crops that grow above ground, often seed crops like maize. The moon is associated with manioc, which it gave to women (Weiss 1975:369, on the River Campa), and other cultigens that form tubers—feminine crops that grow under the earth (Chagnon 1976:72-73, on the Yąnomamö).

The moon is also connected with burrowing creatures that invade the earth such as the armadillo, which can also function as a womb symbol. It will be remembered that the armadillo succeeds in piercing the moon's stomach in myth E. The armadillo has many other connections with the moon, such as the mythical fact that it eats the bones of the dead, which it finds buried in graves just as the moon does (Hugh-Jones 1974:257, on the Barasana). In addition to these underworld affinities of the moon and its animal *avataras*, the moon is associated with water as it drags corpses from a frothing river (Lévi-Strauss 1973:320-321, on the Machiguenga), and even the dew at night represents the saliva of the moon (Chagnon 1976:47, on the Yąnomamö). In contrast, the sun travels through the airy world (Wagley 1977:178-179, on the Tapirapé). The Campa-Nomatsiguenga (Shaver 1975:51) couple the transit of the sun with the concept of the lake in the west and death = rejuvenation.

The sun rises resplendently yellow, the bringer of light and warmth (Whitten 1976:44, on the Canelos Quichua). The young, vigorous, and ver hot ascending sun is wrapped in a great number of *new white cushmas* to protect his carriers from his heat (Weiss 1975:374, on the River Campa). He arrives at the zenith in his mature glory. Then he descends, exhausted, to the west and entering the subaquatic underworld to light it with his feeble light and gain strength (by growing younger) for the next day (Whitten 1976:35, on the Canelos Quichua).

The key transformative and aging agent at the zenith and the western horizon is none other than the "devouring" female who is really the Dragon or the moon (younger brother variant) who also

"devours" fire (Roth 1915:135, on the Macusi). According to the following Warao myth I have translated:

The sun has a woman above the clouds, precisely at the zenith or the point where he arrives at midday. That woman prepares his food. When the sun arrives at the zenith he eats, rests, and, already tired, continues on his way. But the woman, who is more fond of walking and swift, goes before him. She hurries in front of the sun and, arriving at the horizon, awaits him with open mouth. When the sun arrives there late in the afternoon, his woman swallows him and from here begins the darkening of the day and the falling of night. It is caused because the sun has been swallowed by his woman.[44] (Barral 1960:62)

The sex = eating metaphor of the system and the fact that in other myths the sun is devoured by a Dragon clearly associate the moon's woman with the Dragon and the sun's ingestion with his death. The mysteries of the systems then transmute death into birth as the sun is carried in the stomach = womb of the woman-Dragon to be reborn in the east.

In summation, to quote Huxley, for the Urubu, "the moon is the patron…of women, and the powers it symbolizes are, mythologically speaking, female; it shines at night when the sun, symbol of the masculine idea, has set" (1956:168). Thus it does not really make any difference if the moon is male or female. Either way the moon expresses the essence of femininity: unconstrained animality. Not only is the moon both a male and a female; it is also both a moon and a sun. But it is a special kind of sun, the nocturnal sun, the "consumed" sun, the sun of the underworld pulled inside out at darkness, I suggest. It merely seems to pass as a planetary visitor across the nightly heavens; actually it is traversing the world of darkness under the earth. To express its inverted nature, the symbol of the moon is its mirror, the same mirror that shamans use on their snuffing boxes when they experience both the metaphorical death that is the hallucinatory experience and—with the implacable logic of the system itself—metaphorical sex as well.

Reichel-Dolmatoff specifies thus dualistic nature of the moon:

The moon is called…"nocturnal sun," a name that clearly suggests that, basically, two aspects of the same being are involved. The moon is part of the sun, a negative, evil part. The sun repented his sin and made it the central part of his moral law, but the moon, when he abducted the daughter of the sun, showed no repentance and, since then, has continued to be a seducer and nocturnal adulterer. (1971:72-73)

Beyond two suns, one of which is the moon, the next possibility is for the moon to mutate into four entities as the Machiguenga (Lévi-Strauss 1973:320-321) have it. In their account the moon, quite appropriately, has his own human wife fertilized by a fish. She then produces four sons who are four suns: the normal diurnal sun; the planet Venus; the weak maleficent sun of the underworld, which sends inopportune rains; and the nocturnal sun, who is so hot that he kills his mother as she gives birth to him—a literal case of birth = death. For that, the nocturnal sun is banished far away into the firmament so that he is invisible today, but still indirectly provides the stars with their light.

In a system as complex as this and in one with as thoroughgoing a dualism, the most obvious sun, the diurnal sun, should be internally differentiated in the same way as the others. Just so the Mundurucú distinguish between the strong, resplendent sun of the dry season and the dull, foreboding sun of the rainy season. Not only does this contrast map on a smaller scale the correlations and oppositions of the sun and the moon onto the two manifestations of the sun (heat and light = well-bring, cold and wet = hardship); it also maintains the proper physical identification of each. The dry season sun, like the diurnal sun, is portrayed as a handsome young Indian man who has obeyed the marriage rules; the rainy season sun, like the nocturnal sun, is considered an ugly, deformed Indian man who has transgressed them (Lévi-Strauss 1973:320-321).

All the gifts of the sun are positive; all the "presents" of the moon are negative. The sun is assimilated to fire because it is the origin of fire, the "house" of fire. Fire is associated with constrained libido in Northern Kayapó thought and opposed to hair as unconstrained libido in the context of socializing young males (T. Turner 1968:178). The moon, already linked with unconstrained libido, would seem to be opposed to fire as well; that was the Yagua conclusion. Again, both fire and marriage are explicitly linked agents of transformation and convert Nature into Culture in Cuiva thought (Arcand 1974). Because the sun is fire personified and obeys the rules of marriage, the same civilizing effects can be attributed to him. Perhaps that is why many groups that consider themselves the only civilized human beings believe they are the direct descendants of the sun.

In contrast the moon brings nothing but trouble. The moon, in foolish younger brother style--although he is here represented as the father of the sun--causes woman's labor pains because he

leaned his wife against stinging nettles (Weiss 1975:369, on the River Campa). He is the origin of that noxious plague, white men, through his homicidal tendencies. He creates them by ripping his first child to pieces and blowing on the pieces (1975:372). Creative chaos is his.

Venus Keeps Changing Its Sex

Venus, as the brightest star (planet) in the heavens after the sun and moon, can play the role of a moon female substitute when the latter changes its sex to become the mortal younger brother of the sun. Having stressed that much of the moon's meaning derives from analogies between it swaxing and waning and animate processes, I must now inquire into the phenomenological basis of the role of Venus to see if similar analogies hold. At the same time I have to find the basis of Venus's ambivalent nature, how at times it is linked with the moon but at other times, as in the Machiguenga case mentioned earlier, is regarded as a kind of "sun" and therefore masculine.

The answer to both questions lies in Venus's paradoxical astronomical behavior. The best discussion of this problem is Aveni's (1979) examination of the connection between astronomy and cosmology in Maya thought. I am again stretching the cultural and geographic boundaries of the model to bring this material in both because of its close mythical correspondences to the South American lowland data and because the astronomical problems it raises clearly transcend any earthly culture area and could as easily have been observed in the Amazon as in Yucatan.

In both areas Venus is often regarded as female or has definite female connotations. For example, the Maya call it *xux ek* ("wasp star") (Aveni 1979:274), wasps being one of the class of noxious pests associated with the anaconda-Dragon. Venus, in further correspondence to these associations, is the announcer of tempests and storms (1979:275), another attribute of the feminine-associated Dragon. Moreover in the Maya area it is the herald of calamity (1979:275), just as the rainbow is in South America and in Mesoamerica insofar as it is identified as a giant rainbow snake (Hunt 1977:154). Although in Maya thought Venus was the light-skinned male god *Quetzalcoatl-Kukulcan*, he has as many female associations as the moon. He dies in a feminine way, through autosacrifice, his heart ascending into the heavens from his funeral

pyre. Venus represents darkness (Thompson 1970:196, on the Maya), carries death symbols (1970:302-303), and is called "stench" (1970:304)--all female characteristics. Further, the Zinacantecans call it the "Chamula Girl," sweeper of the sun's path (Hunt 1977:140-141). This mixture of male and female traits should come as no surprise to one familiar with the South American data.

A comparison of South American myths with the famous Central American Plumed Serpent may seem farfetched; yet there is a South American lowland prototype for *Quetzalcoatl*: the Makiritare "Feathered Serpent," *Hui'io* ("Mother of Waters"), a huge boa who is the rainbow, *Huasudi*, covered with the multicolored plumes of birds it wears like a crown (Armellada and Napolitano 1975:152). This picture of *Huasudi* is congruent with the *Quetzalcoatl*-Venus associations of Central America inasmuch as I have already associated both the rainbow and Venus with the Dragon--only in this case it is the more benevolent Celestial Dragon (rather than the malevolent Subaquatic Dragon) in a role isomorphic with the benevolent "lettered" role *Quetzalcoatl* plays in Mexico. This mythical instance from the Makiritare also offers an interesting opposition to the myth of the birds bathing in the blood of the malevolent Dragon (Figure 5), which Shipibo myth 10 addresses. The birds get their brilliant plumage by bathing in the blood of the dead Dragon, in its bad manifestation; in its good manifestation the Dragon appropriates the brilliant colors of the birds by wearing their feathers as a diadem.

The reasons for the mutable and hence feminine associations of Venus are to be found in its strange astronomical behavior. Above all else save the moon, Venus is the "mortal star." It waxes and wanes like the moon; yet unlike the moon it is tied in the heavens to the masculine sun. In Aveni's words:

The physical phenomenon that corresponds to the *Quetzalcoatl* myth is the 8-day disappearance of the planet in front of the sun. Following this brief period the planet is glimpsed for a fleeting moment in the morning sky prior to sunrise…a few days later the dazzling light of the planet, exceeded only by the sun and moon in luminance, enters a period of maximum brightness as Venus rises earlier and may be viewed for a longer time each day. As the planet pulls farther away from the sun, disappearing in the solar light for about 9 months…after it has made its initial appearance Venus is absent from the celestial scene for 7 weeks while it passes behind the sun. It returns to view in the evening sky for an

additional 9-month period, its brightness waxing until, toward the end of the evening-star viewing period, it once again achieves its greatest brilliance…*Venus moves on the sky as if attached to the sun.* (1979:275, emphasis mine)

The sun is masculine and unchanging, whereas the planet Venus, like the moon, is feminine in its waxing and waning; yet Venus is visibly linked to the sun. Hence it becomes an anomalous entity ripe for mythical use. No wonder it changes its sex.

Harpy Eagles Are Noble

The diurnal sun is associated with the sky and masculinity. Thus the other natural denizens of the sky, birds, ought also to be masculine symbols and companions of the sun, sharing many of his attributes and being opposed to the same entities he opposes. Such is indeed the case. According to River Campa belief "the sun, *Pává*, when born is too hot and threatens to incinerate the earth. He is then carried up into the sky by the bird *kentíparo* who becomes the sun's 'godfather' " (Weiss 1975:375). The sky is known as the "village of the birds" (O. Villas Boas and C. Villas Boas 1973:147, on the Kamaiurá). Just as the other categories are dualistic, however, so too is the sky. It is divided into two halves. The first, from the eastern horizon to the zenith, is the realm of the sun at his most masculine. From the zenith to the western horizon and down to the nadir, the sun gradually loses his masculine attributes and certain female-associated birds are linked with him there. Given this dichotomy the village of the birds is expressly identified with the sun at the zenith. Indeed a *white* bird is responsible for the origin of the sun in Warao mythology:

The sun is a huge blaze, unextinguishable, in a cloud--a white bird, of medium size, called 'Mother Sun,' flew up high without resting, carrying in her beak a lighted coal. Arriving at a small cloud, she placed the lighted coal on it. The coal started a blaze in the cloud and it has never been extinguished. Well, that cloud is called the sun. (Armellada and Napolitano 1975:37, trans. mine)

Just as the bird carried the first fire to mankind in the form of a coal in myth 10, so in this Warao variant it carries a coal to the heavens. Both the sun and the ascending birds are contrasted with fish and fishing, which takes place at the nadir (O. Villas Boas and

C. Villas Boas 1973:147, on the Kamaiurá). Subsidiary associations also hold, for the birds are aligned with gentle, beneficial rains and are contrasted with the violent rains the spirits of the Dragon bring (Lévi-Strauss 1969:213, on the Bororo). A benevolent Sun Bird warns the deserving portion of mankind of the approaching evil waters in a Piaroa myth (Wilbert 1966:66-71). These associations correspond to the set of relations: sun = masculine, water = feminine (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1971:42, on the Desana). Ethnic positive self-identity is linked with birds, whereas foreign enemies are the progeny of snakes (Wagley 1977:176, on the Tapirapé).

The woodpecker is uniquely identified, among all the smaller birds, with the sun. This is based on his long phallic-appearing pointed beak, which he aggressively uses to peck into feminine-associated trees, and on the face that the red-headed woodpecker (*Campephilus rubricollis*) either shares the color of his scalp with the sun (Lévi-Strauss 1969:292, on the Kraho) or gives it his brilliant red headdress (Nimuendajú 1967:159, on the Apinayé). The woodpecker disappears under water, where he is swallowed by a fish. The worried sun uses his phallic staff to dry up the pool in which the fish lies, makes the fish vomit the woodpecker, and revivifies him (Lévi-Strauss 1973:109, on the Mataco) in a direct parallel with myth 8 wherein the older (sun) brother uses a similar staff to dry up the lake around a cayman that has devoured the leg of his brother. In a sexual connotations of the woodpecker versus fish = Caymanic Dragon (devouring = sex, vomiting = antisex) confrontation, the reader will remember the earlier episode in which the woodpecker, acting as the sun's agent, carved the sex of the Wooden Bride, the future spouse of the sun, but a bride who already had fish in her belly. The Mataco myth is a direct inversion of the Wooden Bride myth; here the sun, acting as the woodpecker's agent, undoes the act of sex whereas earlier he had made it possible. Woodpeckers also attack the World Tree itself (a withholding Dragon figure) at the behest of the Magical Twins (Powlison 1971-1972:76, on the Yagua).

Other long beaked and brilliantly colored birds, such as the kingfisher or the hummingbird are associated with the sun. In River Campa belief, for example, a small hummingbird succeeds in fastening a fine in the heavens by which the sun can ascend (Weiss 1975:389) in a replication of the function of the Warao Sun Bird. There are drab hummingbirds, which, according to the color code of the model, are demons; but most are resplendently colored,

are sun symbols, and are therefore considered good spirits (1975:266).[45]

Birds act as attendants of the sun, who is benevolent and brings cultural things to mankind: directly, as when a Yąnomamö culture hero learns the secret of preparing plantains, transforms himself into a bird, and gives the cultigens to man (Armellada and Napolitano 1975:207); indirectly by using birds (myth 10) as intermediaries who actively bring cultural traits to humans. The Shipibo and Cashibo variant of myth 10--the parrot bringing fire to man--which Steward and Métraux (1948:595) show, is an example of the latter function.

As another example of the culture hero intermediary function of birds, let me cite a short Shipibo myth about the origin of the correct way to paddle canoes told to me by José. It also reveals another similarity between the positive birds and mankind. They are capable of song (ordered tones), which is aligned with men and contrasted with the violent and female noises of other animals.

Anciently, Our Ancestors Did Not Know
How to Paddle a Canoe

Anciently, our ancestors did not know how to paddle. The people first tried to use the sharp edge of the paddle rather than the flat of the blade. When it was like this it was very far to visit one's relatives and to fish. Once one had embarked, it took a long time to arrive. When they went the paddle sliced through the water on edge rather than pushing it. Our Inca lived among us at that time. For that reason [because of the Good Inca's benevolence], the rivers ran in two directions. On one side out to the middle, the current ran downstream, and in the other half to the opposite shore the river ran upstream. Thus, this arrangement helped people to get around even though they did not know how to paddle correctly. Even so, it took weeks and weeks of paddling in this manner to get anywhere. When people did not know how to paddle the trips were very long. Then a dove sang, "Use the broad side of the paddle to stroke the water." Thus it sang. Then one person who was in the canoe said to the other, "Listen, what does it say?" The other responded, "Use the broad side of the paddle to stroke the water," it says." "Let's try it," said the first. Then they tried it, tried paddling with the flat side. The canoe with all the people in it went much quicker--*Queron! Queron!* [the sound of their paddles hitting the gunwales of the canoe]. Happy, happy were the people. They left and arrived very rapidly after hearing the singing of the dove. Afterward, even a faraway place was quickly reached. So it was until today.

Indeed the Shipibo, as a riverine people, will think nothing of piling into a canoe to visit some relatives some meanders distant up- or downriver.

Birds are not a simple piece of masculine imagery, however. They appear on both sides of the sexual equation, their relative placement having to do with distinguishing physical characteristics like beak conformation and color of plumage. When birds are linked with men, and by extension the sun, they have brilliant plumage--even though, as in myth 10, they get their coloring from bathing in the blood of the sun's opposite, the moon. Yet where birds are linked with women as in myth 5, they invariably have drab, dark-colored plumage. Most often such female-associated birds are all black.

Birds are intermediaries. They help the souls of the dead find their way to the celestial paradise, as the following Campa-Nomatsiguenga belief shows:

Nevertheless, not all of the souls that left the earth are thrown downward by the *Tsirontsiro*. There are angels that have the form of hummingbirds, *tsopiti*, and gulls with long tails, *yasibanti*, that try to help the souls climb upward toward their ancestors. (Shaver 1975:51, trans. mine)

Birds also act as benevolent soul intermediaries in Canelos Quichua thought: "Parakeets, *ucupachama manda huichu*, come and go between earth, sky, and underworld, carrying songs and mediating between the souls of spirits and souls of humans" (Whitten 1976:44).

Birds as positive human intermediaries should be linked with another positive human intermediary, the Yellow Jaguar. Their mutual similarities in color alone make such a linkage virtually inescapable. The Yellow Jaguar's close relationship with the sun also means that another bird closely affiliated with the sun, the macaw (*Ara macao*), will also be identified with the Yellow Jaguar. So close is the sun = macaw affiliation that the sun is usually pictured as dwelling within a flame-enshrouded hut of yellow and red macaw feathers, or wearing a crown or diadem of macaw fire-feathers (Fock 1963:33, on the Waiai). The macaw = sun = Yellow Jaguar association is found among the Desana (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1975:110). Its obverse--that the evil or Black Jaguar should be opposed to the macaw, often to the point of literally eating it--finds its corroboration among the Noanamá (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1975:247).

Reigning over all of the lesser birds that ascend in the eastern

sky with the newborn sun is the King of Birds, the harpy eagle (*Harpia harpyja*). Next to the similar but slightly lighter Philippine monkey-eating eagle, the harpy eagle is one of the world's largest raptors. The fact that the harpy eagle also eats monkeys, those female-associated libidinous creatures, represents a happy correspondence between ethology and the dictates of the model. It is no wonder that the Héta, for example, felt great fear and respect for the harpy eagle (Kozák et al. 1979:418-419). "The natives believe the harpy eagle to be the most powerful sorcerer of the other world" (Lévi-Strauss 1969:274, on the Kachuyana). They depended on it for the magic necessary for success in the masculine art of hunting. Just as the Yellow Jaguar was associated with birds generally, so he is affiliated with the King of Birds in particular (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1975:78, on the Tukano), and so too are both associated with the color white, the sun's color (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1975:80), and the sun itself (Fernández Méndez 1979:30, on the Taíno).

In a convenient summation of this pattern of correspondences, the Kumaiurá myth about the final titanic battle of the Spirits of the Dead (O. Villas Boas and C. Villas Boas 1973:129) pits the *evil-smelling* spirits, the *mamaés*, who turn into *snakes* when they go to sleep and are therefore the *avataras* of the Dragon, against the birds and their leader, the harpy eagle. Appropriately enough the *mamaés* are paragons of *mortality*, for they are fragile even in death. Should they be wounded, the *mamaés* will die forever. They march *passively* to their deaths, as feminine-associated spirits should do, against the actively menacing birds. In a South American counterpart to the Mexican Flower War, the two opposing forces meet at an agreed time and place for a ritualistic confrontation whose major aim is capture and sacrifice of the enemy rather than the effective dispatching of them in the field of battle.

> [The] *mamaés* had come only to make a festival, which is their battle with the birds. The festival is always held when the sun becomes dark in the daytime [as during an eclipse]. The birds, whenever they killed a *mamaé*, would carry him off to the giant eagle to eat. He ate every one they brought. [A *mamaé* fatalistically adds]…"That's what happens here to all of us." (1973:132)

Thus the underworld beings are carried up to the sky during the dark of the sun, there to be extinguished forever.

While he plays the role of extinguisher of the dead, the harpy

eagle protects the living. The Desana conceive of the orderly space around the house as being guarded by monstrous invisibly harpy eagles (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1971:108). Just like the Yellow Jaguar, who performs a similar role, the harpy eagle or any of the other related and benevolent birds like the hawk and the woodpecker, can also act in curing sessions to dispel disease from mankind. For example most Héta encampments kept a couple of hawks which

were repeatedly passed over the body of a person suffering from fever. The hawks were held by the feet and the beating of their wings created a cooling air current over the patient's body….In some cures the wing of a harpy eagle…or a whole woodpecker was passed over a patient's body. (Kozák et al. 1979:421-422)

The eagle can also serve as the warrior of the sun against *avataras* of the Dragon like the Forest Ogre. In a Yarabara myth (Wilbert 1958:63) the elder brother of the Magical Twins wants vengeance on the evil, giant, and hairy chief of his enemies, those who have eaten his son in a cannibalistic orgy. He employs the eagle, who swoops down on the ogre, carries him to a high tree, and lets his eaten bones fall to the ground, where a waiting Yellow Jaguar finishes them off. Here the jaguar plays the expected benevolent helper of the eagle and the extinguisher of the Forest Ogres (Spirits of the Dead) just as the harpy eagle is their extinguisher in the heavens.

The harpy eagle is not just opposed to these indirect manifestations of the Dragon but opposed to the Dragon's major forms as well. For instance the eagle opposes the anaconda, just as the jaguar did in the Barasana-Taiwano instance (T. Langdon 1978). There, eagles add their feathers to the arms of a human culture hero and fly with him to steal medicine from the withholding and threatening Poison Anaconda. After the successful theft the hero conveniently--both for the purposes of this model and for his own escape--turns into a bird.

A direct structural inversion of this positive construction of the harpy eagle's nature is also possible, as shown in the Shipibo myth (myth 11) about an expedition to gather salt and the confrontation with a supernaturally large eagle that it entails. Here the harpy eagle is clearly depicted as a classical ogre. He is gigantic, as are ogres, lives in a cave in the tall mountains, as ogres do, and indulges in the kind of cannibalistic forays ogres are wont to engage in. Because he is now an ogre the harpy eagle is portrayed as

stupid, rather than intelligent. He falls for a simple trap. Moreover his cannibalism has sexual connotations for, like the dolphin seducer of myth 2, he is attracted to a human male when the latter is made beautiful, as the woman was earlier, by painted designs.

Attacking a clay dummy of the decorated person, the eagle gets his talons mired in this South American "tar baby"; is dragged from the air, his natural element, by the weight of his false victim; and dies in an appropriate manner. Defeated by mud, a metonym of the feminine earth, this aerial creature drowns in water and is devoured, like the jaguar when it too is an ogre, by voracious piranha mish, minor forms of the Dragon. The River Campa to the south of the Shipibo have a nearly identical myth about a giant hawk ogre, hawks being a minor form of the eagle (Weiss 1975:408:410). Even though the nature of the character is inverted, the air-water opposition of this deep-structure tale of the perils of illicit sex is again recapitulated. The Talamancan version of this tale resolves the contradictions by having *flames shoot up* when the eagle ogre strikes the water (Stone 1962:58).

King Vultures Stink

The harpy eagle is not the only large bird to grace the daytime sky. Rather than have the harpy eagle play the double role of good and bad figure as the Shipibo do, most peoples divide the nature of the eagle into two contrasting eagles: the beneficent Giant Eagle, the harpy eagle proper, and the maleficent Ancient Eagle, the kind vulture (*Sarcoramphus papa*). The king vulture is an impressive bird. Next to the Andean condor, which does not penetrate into the lowlands, it is one of the largest vultures in the world. A huge black bird, it has a notable white patch of neck plumage. The normal *urubus*, or black vultures (*Coragyps atratus*) (*poincosco*, as the Shipibo call them) represent no such anomaly because they are totally of the appropriate negative color, black. The king vulture, by virtue of his mixed plumage, is much more a liminal animal and one, therefore, that can be employed most effectively in the overlapping domains of myth.

There is much to both link and oppose these two large birds. Whereas the king vulture eats carrion--cold, anticultural food--the harpy eagle eats live, and therefore hot, cultural food. This opposition repeats Shipibo myth 6 about the tapir and another myth, myth 4, about the jaguar; the former, as a combinatorial

variant of the king vulture, was forced to collect dead fish, whereas the latter, as a combinatorial variant of the harpy eagle, hunted and killed live peccaries. Perhaps because of their connection with carrion, vultures are tabooed food all over the tropical forest (Farabee 1924:33, on the Macusi; Kozák et al. 1979:419, on the Héta; Nimuendajú 1967:93, on the Apinayé).

These asassociations also relate to the Kamaiurá opposition between the spirits of the dead and the harpy eagle, so that one should expect to see, by a transitive operation, the king vulture associated with feminine qualities as the patron of the western sky, just as the harpy eagle, as patron of the eastern sky, is aggressively masculine. Moreover the woman = vulture/eagle = man equation is also congruent with the male = higher/lower = female equation within the character of the vulture. The vulture's domain is the *lower* sky, the sky of the cloud level (Weiss 1975:265, on the River Campa), below the heaven of the sun (Powlison 1977:58, on the Yagua) and the eagle. The souls of criminals go to the heaven of the king vulture (Powlison 1977:58).[46]

Because in the sociologic world of tropical forest tribes, women defer to men, at least in public affairs, the king vulture calls on the harpy eagle for aid (Lévi-Strauss 1969:274, on the Kachuyana). As I linked intelligence with males and stupidity with females in the context of the sun/moon dyad, so too are the cultures depicted as being stupid and easily duped. Thus fire must be stolen from the vulture, as it had to be stolen from the Dragon, through the use of a ruse, whereas it was given voluntarily by the eagle. Nor does the eagle fall for human deception (1969:141, on the Shipaya).

The king vulture is thus the anomalous bird of the sky because it presents the paradox of a female element dwelling in a male domain (Huxley 1956:169, on the Urubu). By all rights the vulture should inhabit the underworld, not the airy world.[47] The owl offers a somewhat similar problem, but its sinister feminine and demonic (Weiss 1975:286, on the River Campa) associations are more congruent with its nocturnal habits (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1971:52, 209; Wagley 1977:177, on the Tapirapé). The owl has much the same scary connotations for the Shipibo and other Indian groups as it does for Westerners, for it is affiliated with cemeteries, death, and contagion. Its hooting announces someone's death (Powlison 1977:63, on the Yagua). It too is an impressive and anomalous bird that hunts live food like the eagle but does so at night, the domain of the moon and the vulture.

The vulture, however, confounds cosmology by basking in the heat of the sun's rays, circling high next to the sun, and going about by day, the sun's domain (Huxley 1956:14, on the Urubu). It appears that Indian philosophers have tried to get around this discrepancy by doing two things. Through a tortuous line of reasoning the vulture's day is converted into the moon's night, thus an appropriate home for the vulture. The anomalous qualities of the king vulture are used as a kind of linchpin to hold the two halves of the cosmologic model, which were beginning to look too separated, together.

The vulture is specifically identified as being a female animal (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1971:209, on the Desana). Its congruences with the feminine role demonstrate this as well when it is associated with the origin of mortality in an Arecuna myth in which a hero first captures a frog (a minor variant of the Dragon):

> Just when it is being captured at the top of a tree, the frog swims off with the man to an island and abandons him there at the foot of a tree. The poor man cannot move away from the tree, because the island is so small, and the vultures cover him with excrement. Venus and Moon in turn both refuse to come to his aid [naturally, as the vultures are their symbols of filth]. Sun agrees to do so, warms him, and gives him one of his daughters in marriage. But the Indian is unfaithful to her with one of the vulture's daughters. As a result of this, his youth and beauty are destined to be short lived. (Lévi-Strauss 1969:264)

In this myth the evil agents are various feminine-associated animals such as the frog (who also is linked with the tree once more), vultures, the moon, and Venus--all of whom involve the appropriate qualities of filth and withheld aid and are linked with or cause cold, excessive sex (adultery), and the origin of mortality. These figures stand in sharp contrast to the sun, who identifies with the man and provides wealth and prosperity. The daughters of the vultures fulfill the seducer role of the Fish Women, to which they are related.

As an Ancient Eagle of the sky the vulture is further aligned with cemeteries, like the moon and the owl. There it feeds on the dead and illnesses (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1971:72, on the Desana). It lives in the Milky Way (1971:43-44), the abode of sickness and the Dragon, the dung heap of the universe. Although the vulture and the Milky Way wind their ways through the air, their actual place is in the underworld. In fact the night sky *is* the underworld, the

world turned inside-out. One can now see why the vulture, like other birds, is associated with the gift of fire to man but, unlike other birds, must give it passively. The vulture must be tricked by a jaguar culture hero (Huxley 1956:14, on the Urubu; O. Villas Boas and C. Villas Boas 1973:89-91, on the Xinguano) rather than giving it actively and willingly as the male-associated birds do.

The Ancient Eagle, although a bird, is actually an analogue of the Dragon. Fire is also stolen from a female demiurge who holds it within her vagina in a manner reminiscent of the theft of that same entity from the jaws of the cayman (need one be reminded of the jaws = vagina equivalence of the model?) and the talons of the vulture (Hugh-Jones 1974:253, on the Barasana), thus proving the female affiliations of the vulture from a different direction.

Paraphrased, the two contrasting metamyths of this section of the model are: Masculine-related bird actively steals fire from subaquatic, women-related Dragon, who passively resists : : masculine earth-related Jaguar actively steals fire from a passively resisting feminine-related vulture. Thus the active = male, passive = female opposition is again maintained even though the actors have been transposed.

A key metaphor of this entire system is the maggot, companion of the vulture. In a story of wide currency, particularly among the Tupi-speaking tribes, a human male either hides near or within the rotting corpse of an animal, or pretends to be a corpse. There, clothed in maggots, the hunter attracts the vulture. When the vulture lands, the hero seizes fire from him and thereby inaugurates cultural life (Lévi-Strauss 1969:139, on the Apapocuva; Wagley 1977:177, on the Tapirapé). The vulture eats dead flesh--carrion--yet he gives the gift of civilizing fire so that man can cook fresh flesh. The maggot, born of putrefaction, represents life immanent in the softness of death (Huxley 1956:15, on the Urubu). Repeatedly the message is conveyed, just as the Milky Way can be both a river of death and a river of rejuvenation, the origin and destiny of life is death. As soon as one is born, the myths say, one begins to die. Yet at death one can look forward to joining the circle of rebirth. "At a cosmological level, regular alternation is a cyclical and reversible process, but at a human level it is irreversible for the generations must succeed one another by replacement" (Hugh-Jones 1974:165). The Barasana circumvent this problem of the linearity of progressive time and the circularity of noncumulative time by regarding life and death as mere alternations between

polar opposites. They also make time cyclic by connecting the two through a concept of rebirth wherein the souls of the dead are reborn as infants (1974:141). The two times now become one, a spiral, corkscrewing through the generations of humans and worlds. Bastien (1978:47, on the Aymara) and LaBarre (1948:120, on the Aymara) present particularly elegant versions of this birth-death-rebirth cycle from the highlands.

It is in this sense that women are symbols of death and decay even though, through the intercession of male fertility, they give birth to new life. Although women may give birth, belief states that they do not actually create the child. According to a common notion of reproduction in the tropical forest, the female is a mere passive container, a vessel, in which men literally build fetuses through repeated acts of copulation. They produce in this manner a congealed mass of sperm in the woman's womb, which is later born as an infant (Karsten 1964:130, on the Jívaro). That is why *Mair*, the Urubu jaguar-based culture hero who is also the sun transformed into a solar bird, can fly past a fruit Tree of Life, see a fruit (i.e., womb) full of worms (read *maggots*), and remark, "That would make a nice woman" (Huxley 1956:217). The container may be putrid, but man makes the unblemished child that emerges from it.



The Zygote Quickens

An Overview of the Model's Mechanisms

Principles of the Model

The origin of life lies in the sex act; hence the correlations I have explored produce the following congruences: Intercourse = taking drugs = death =orgasm (E.J. Langdon 1974, on the Siona; Reichel-Dolmatoff 1971:174, on the Desana; Siskind 1973:139-140, on the Sharanahua). The energy that makes this vast cosmic machine run in the energy of sex, not as a unitary force, but as the yin-yang complementarity of opposites, the *tao* of life:

Boga, en efficacy, a power female in context like the uterus, the warm fire of the hearth, associated with river and fish. It has a complementary aspect, *tulari*, the male energy associated with the forest--the two together are fertilization and fecundity [and, as he added elsewhere (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1971:45), contagion and death as well], the great current that circulates. (1971:54-55)

As this quotation indicates, the cosmos is not an inert machine. Instead it is one vast egg, a biologic perpetual-motion machine that is fundamentally animistic in the sense of the spirituality of all things. Human intrusions in this model are always expressed through the doublespeak of animal objective-correlatives. What sort of background could have suggested such a model? I have already alluded to the ecological and psychological underpinnings of the model, but what about the social organiza-

tional background of which these myths were presumably the justification and the explanation?

The Battle of the Sexes is a Stalemate

Much of the model's symbolism derives from the cooperative-competitive tensions of the profound sexual division of labor that characterizes all tropical forest societies (Adams-Spell and Wood-Townsend 1975:158). The most meaningful distinctions in these societies are those between male and female, and so are the most productive distinctions upon which the model is built. After the work of Siskind (1973) and Y. Murphy and R. Murphy (1974), it is a commonplace to regard tropical forest society as being not one but two societies: one of men and another of women. Both of these societies are essentially self-contained and necessarily impinge on each other at one point only: sex. Most of a man's or a woman's time is spent with voluntary work or gossip groups composed of his or her own sex. Even actual residential segregation in the form of a central men's hut surrounded by the huts of women and children is not uncommon.

Although Shipibo society by no means reflects such an extreme configuration, one is very conscious nevertheless of the separation of the sexes. Men eat at a distance from the women, hunched over their food, with backs protectively turned. Clusters of related women, mostly sisters, mothers, and daughters, will gather on the raised floor platforms of the houses within the matrilocal compound and chat happily as they engage in beadwork or the painting of textiles. Men by contrast often work alone or in the company of other males, especially sons, when they go hunting in the forest or fishing in the lakes and rivers. Even traditional times, when a village would welcome guests from other villages up- or downriver, the resident men would engage the visiting men in a ritual wrestling match separate from the women before both sexes settled down to entertain the visitors.

Taking advantage of the unique energetics of each sex, these societies have evolved a pattern of resource exploitation that is extremely efficient. Men engage in labor that involves sporadic and irregular outputs of very high caloric energy to obtain resources that are mobile, unpredictable, and yet of high-quality caloric or nutritional payoff, such as meat. The women engage in an equally important and complementary regime of regular and continuous

outputs of relatively low caloric energy to garner resources that tend to be stationary, predictable, and of rather low-quality caloric or nutritional payoff but high bulk, like cultivated tubers. In this system the women produce close to a home base the bulk, by weight, of the edible foods (Dumont 1978a:40); the men produce a far smaller contribution by weight, but one that is very highly rated because of its desirability, and they do so from greater distances away from the home base (Gross 1975). Meggers (1971) has pointed out the scarcity of animal protein generally within the tropical forest; from the ethnographic evidence, most groups would appear to concur, particularly those with greater numbers and those located near the rivers, like the Shipibo. In such societies there are often two words for hunger, one that merely means "my belly is empty," and the other, which refers to meat hunger. The Shipibo echo this dichotomy by considering as incomplete any meal, no matter how generous, that does not include fish.

In a society that knows few other distinctions between people other than those of age and sex, it is not surprising that sex not only is the basis for technoeconomic organization but is the source of most of the metaphors of social interaction as well. I have noted elsewhere (Roe 1976, 1979) the tenacity of the sexual division of labor in jungle society in general and in Shipibo society in particular, stressing the clear-cut lines of division between man's and woman's work. For example in Shipibo society women are responsible for the domestic arts of pottery, textiles, and to a lesser degree, basketry; men are allocated the preparation of tools of their trade, such as arrows, bows, and harpoons, and wood carving generally. Because women are also responsible for the application of the characteristic and highly elaborated Shipibo geometric art style on items of material culture and because men are the technicians who are delegated the roughing out of functional form, the making of a traditional sword-club, or *huino*, makes a perfect exemplar of the interdependence of the sexes. A man will first carve the flaring, bladed form of the club out of dense *chonta* palm wood. Then he will hand it to a related female, such as his wife or sister, who will lightly draw the design onto the smooth surface of the club's blade. Then she will hand it back to the man, who will carefully follow the exact lines of her sketch to incise the design into the wood. Without a female who is willing to take the time to draw a *quënëa* for a man, he cannot make a proper *huino*. And thus it goes for the rest of a Shipibo man's productions.

A man will hunt and fish, but only a woman will prepare and cook the meat for the meal. Thus the symbolic male associations with the forest and the water and the female associations with the hut and hearth are not arbitrary but derive from the efficiencies of the sexual division of labor itself. This pattern of interdependence, with each task segregated from the inappropriate sex, is maintained by the most powerful of all social sanctions in small-scale, face-to-face societies: the power of public opinion. No Shipibo man, for instance, would dare to help his wife carry a *chomo* full of water from the bathing area on the shore of a river or lake to the village high up on a bluff of old alluvium alongside the body of water, despite the face the burden is heavy and the distance often long, because of the intimate female associations of that particular vessel form. Yet he will cheerfully help his wife carry water in a bright red plastic pail without fear of being labeled effeminate by his peers because the pail, as an industrial import of Western technology like the Briggs and Stratton inboard engine he will use to power his big dugout canoe (*peque-peque*), is something with which he can identify. Such technological items both fit the preexistent proper male categorization of task responsibility and carry not freight of indigenous intellectual baggage relating to the consequences of conflicting sex roles.

Of course, many men know how to do things normally proscribed to them because they belong to females. For example a man will cook for himself on an extended canoe trip with other men in pursuit of some masculine task such as fishing. The same man, however, will never cook when he reaches a village where he can find a woman on whom he can make demands. I shall never forget the plight of one of my older male informants, who wandered disconsolately from the hut of one daughter to another looking for some prepared food because his wife was neither speaking to him, interacting with him, nor fulfilling any other wifely duties such as cooking. She was, quite literally, on strike. Under normal conditions, then, it is quite impossible for a man to live without the economic and technological aid of a woman; nor is it possible for a woman to live without the technological and economic contribution of a man.

The normal relationship of the sexes is thus akin to a kind of barter between sovereign peoples. Since the only point where they come together is in the act of sex, that too takes on the aspect of an economic exchange. As Siskind (1973:79) points out, in its crudest

form the exchange boils down to women exchanging sex for meat. This represents a potentially perilous situation. Men are tied to women and women to men in the unavoidable embrace of both economic necessity and physiological need. Such close association obviously produces friction as well as gratification. Psychologically, jungle peoples appear to have adjusted to this claustrophobic interdependence by injecting between the sexes various spacing mechanisms in residence, task assignment, and matters of the sensibilities.

It is precisely because the sexes are so closely interwoven that they are so separated emotionally and physically. As many observers will agree, the brittleness of the marriage bond and the face that the greatest emotional involvement is made with one's consanguines and not with one's affines—and the latter include one's husband or wife—both point to the paradoxical solution of converting the relations between the sexes into strictly business as usual on the one hand and into high excitement and attraction on the other. Because sexual attraction is intimately related to mystery (Wolf 1970), this removal of emotional intimacy between eligible males and females results in heightened sexual satisfaction whenever they do come together (Gregor 1977).

Anybody who has worked in the jungle will recall the lively interest in sex and pleasure with it that characterizes the average day's activities. If all one needs is about three hours of work each day in the new alluvial niche of the tropical forest to guarantee sufficiency in food, clothing, and shelter (Bergman 1974), a good part of the rest of the time can be spent cultivating the fine arts of sleeping, resting, goofing off, having affairs, and gossiping about others having affairs. A goodly portion of my field notes from work among the Shipibo is filled with references to who is having an affair with whom. Therefore it is no accident that much of the subject matter of the myths and tales I have used is sex. In speaking of the Tupi-Kugwahiv, Kracke makes the same point: "Folktales and myths are full of sexual themes, including some that in our culture tend to be deeply repressed, such as castration in jealous vengeance" (1978a:24).

One of the few readily available resources for mythical symbolism in tropical forest society with its sparse but effective technology and ephemeral but attractive art is the body, both human and animal. Societies like that of the Shipibo have not stinted in its use for mythical purposes.

The imagery of sex in the myths, as well as its function in reality, leads one to a potentially unpopular conclusion, that comradeship is distinctly unconducive to sexual satisfaction. Instead a certain amount of sexual antagonism actually enhances satisfaction. Thus we can understand that the battle of the sexes expressed in much of the, to our eyes, overly harsh antifeminine rhetoric of the model is closely coupled with the intricate patterning of mutual dependency ordinary life dictates. It is because of the firm necessity that men feel in the mundane world for association with women that they are led, in the symbolic realm of myth, to separate men from women. It is even possible for them to maintain in myth, contrary to all the empirical evidence available to them, that life without the fair sex is possible, indeed preferable. It is the improbably struggle with this impossible idea that provides the intellectual tension needed to propel this overarching system in all of its intermeshing parts.

Thanatos and Eros in the Jungle

The model is real life reified. It is always telling men both what they want to hear—that they are superior and autonomous—and what they do not want to hear—that there is no inferiority or superiority of parts in a system of interrelated wholes. Although women are constantly linked with negative qualities and attributes, the model affirms that, although *negative* and *positive* may be terms of the system, they cannot map into inferior and superior statuses or functions.

It is ironic that as I graphed the web of symbolic associations with males and females in Figure 14 as an antidote to the rigid dyadic matrix presented earlier, I noticed that the role of women is far more elaborated than is the role of men. Because men are largely responsible for the elaboration of this model, one is struck by their fascination with and repulsion from women. This is represented by their struggle to come to terms with what are perceived to be women's preponderantly negative connotations while at the same time they bring many positive benefits, the most important being the children who perpetuate society. Although women play little role in ritual (the Shipibo *ani Ŝhrëati* being a conspicuous exception), they occupy in men's minds an inordinate importance and in fact monopolize much of the model's complexity. It is almost as though men, unable to justify themselves biologically

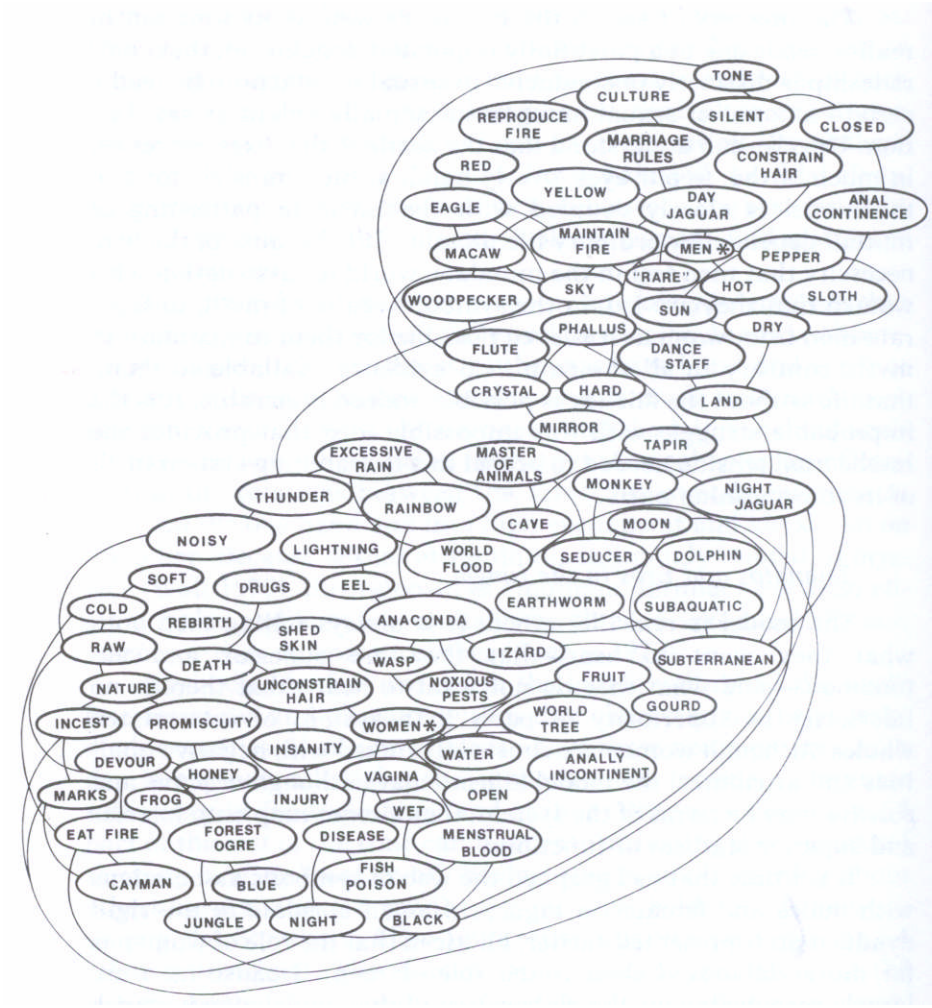


Figure 14. Web of signification surrounding the Sex in the Model

through giving birth to children, have begotten instead an elaborately intricate work of intellectual art.

Even in cultures like the Shipibo, who are known for the importance they give to “mother right” (Karsten 1964:185), and among whom women play an extraordinary role, mythical women still fulfill an essentially negative function. Even when I recorded

myths from women, who might, as females, be expected to place characters of their own sex in the best possible light, their myths still clearly portrayed the male view. Indeed as I mentioned earlier, all of my female informants took pains to tell me they had heard their myths from some male relative, usually a father or an uncle.

Thus the primary principle of the model is that the negative is just as essential as the positive in the continued maintenance of a system based on interdependent parts. Women, as eros personified, also represent—in the dangerous connotations of their sexual functions as seducers and adulteresses—thanatos. Yet through death they engender life and love. It is the asymmetry of interdigitating parts that gives dynamism to the self-perpetuating whole rather than the static dyadic appearances of parts of its oppositionary structure. In short, sexual antagonism reflects sexual dependency as the primary principle of the model.

Cosmic Sex: A Circuit through the Model

Let me now make a brief if somewhat poetic tour through the cosmologic model I have constructed for the lowlands. I follow the sun to show how the model works as a continuum machine, albeit one based on a strict dualistic logic. The sun emerges in the east, white with youth. He is hard, masculine, and bursting with creative vitality. He is also too hot, too creative, and threatens to incinerate the world. His attendants are huge Yellow Jaguars and flaming red birds like the macaw. Together with phallic-beaked birds like the hummingbird and the stork, the attendants carry the sun's benevolent gifts, chief among them masculine and civilizing fire, to the grateful humans on the earth below. At the same time they bear the sun high enough above the terrestrial disc that his fire becomes muted and warming rather than harsh and burning.

The ones who receive these gifts of the Sun Birds and convey them to the people are the good shamans who, as medicine men, travel through the levels of the heavens on their hallucinogenic trips to commune with the spirits. Like the giant harpy eagle, the sun soars effortlessly through the airy world on his ascent toward the zenith. There, in the House of Fire, built of gleaming macaw fire-feathers, in the House of the Birds, the sun is at the apex of his male vigor, shining golden yellow in the middle of the sky, his

handsome countenance unblemished. Pure quartz crystals, as white and hard as he is, emanate from him and full upon the dry earth below as fertilizing semen-rain. At earth level they are picked up by medicine men to become their jaguar familiars in a common battle against contagion. The Thunder Jaguars of the Celestial Dragon—a near counterpart of the sun's benevolence and the Subaquatic Dragon's malevolence—bridge the realms and bring, on the hovering wings of birds, gentle rain in sufficient quantities to fertilize man's crops and aid the descending rays of the sun to bathe the earth in fecundity and health. In the forests of the Master of Animals, as earthly *avatara* of both the sun and the Subaquatic Dragon, dispenses animals freely to petitioning shamans for hunters who practice moderation in hunting; as agent of the World Tree he ejects darts and slivers of sickness to those who recklessly destroy sentient life. Either way, the Master of Animals overlaps the realms on earth as the Thunder Jaguars do in the heavens *and* in the earth.

Then, both despite and because of his great fertilizing power, the sun inexorably begins to age; as he ages, his penis grows and he descends in the sky. Perceptions of dire female influences multiply as the Giant Eagle of the eastern sphere gives way as companion of the sun to the Ancient Eagle—the eater of soft carrion—of the western sphere. The stench of death rises ominously as the sun sexualizes and slowly descends, limping, in the feminine west, the home of the dead. His bone, muscle, and penis turn soft with decay, and maggots teem in his myriad wounds. The sun's face, now heavily lined, is blackened and obscured as he enters the orifices of his woman, who awaits him with open mouth, the portal of the underworld.

The sun sinks beneath the cold waters of a deep western lagoon. There the Subaquatic Dragon, hideous sexual energy in reverse, devours him—swallows him whole—and he dies. Destructive floods, excessive waters well up from under the world and sweep life away. The sun turns into a skeleton inside the fetid body of the monster, paradoxically growing younger in its womb. He becomes the night sun; his visible bones turn blue as he wears them on the outside as a celestial exoskeleton. In darkness the worlds reverse themselves in the mirror he carries, and the dead sun, now in the form of the feminine-associated, cannibalistic, and menstruation-causing pallid moon, is carried through the night sky, now a watery abyss, on a snaking river of disease and refuse

that also becomes the transforming river of eternal youth and cyclic rebirth, the Milky Way, the way of the tapir and the deer. Black vultures, owls, and stinging wasps are his winged companions. Like them he feeds, to replenish his body, on the corpses of the dead and the souls of the living, seducing women, causing them to pollute themselves and him with menstrual blood, and making them give birth to monsters.

In the depths of the night sky = underworld = forest, the moon consorts with other libidinous adulterers, like Black Jaguars, Forest Ogres, and human bad shamans or witch doctors, to send plague and magical death to mankind. His face spotted and disfigured, the nocturnal sun now reaches the nadir, and his disarticulated bones begin to stir. He is vomited up by the hairy Dragon. He fishes himself out as it were, losing his feminine nature to the Fish Woman, and becomes the male who retrieves her and expunges her toothy sex. He takes the form of a fetus within the womb of the World Tree. As he nears the surface of the water—the sky in reverse—the eastern horizon begins to lighten in anticipation. Finally, delivered of all female corruption, the sun bursts fully formed into the air to begin anew his diurnal celestial ascent.

Antiquity of the Model

The Peruvian Highlands

If one wishes to search for precedents of the complex symbolism I have detailed from the tropical lowlands of South America, one good place to start would be with what is perhaps the pristine state of South America: Chavín. The civilization was named after the highland Peruvian site of Chavín located some 3,135 m. above sea level at the entrance of the Callejón de Conchucos on the eastern flanks of the Andean Cordillera Blanca (Roe 1974:6). There a stone pyramid, a sunken circular plaza, monumental architectural and free-standing sculpture mark the central site of a civilization that seems to have existed from roughly 1200 to 300 B.C. (Rowe 1967:73). From the highland center it spread to other Northern Highland sites like Pacopampa and Kuntur Wasi, to *ceja* sites like Kotosh near the montaña, to North Coast sites like Cerro Blanco and Cerro Sechín, and to Central Coast sites like Ancón (Roe 1974:6). Trade or pilgrimage also re-

sulted in Chavín influence on the South Coast at "Karwa" in Ica (Cordy-Collins 1974).

Although Chavín is usually thought of as a highland or coastal style, it actually has close connections with the jungle to the east. Its monuments present clear depictions of many of the figures discussed in this book. Tello, the Peruvian archaeologist, discovered the Chavín civilization and its cultural function as a seminal influence on all succeeding Peruvian civilizations. He first called attention to the tropical forest affiliations of Chavín iconography in 1923 with the publication of his volume, *Wira Kocha*. Further, Lathrap (1971a:75-76, 1974) has made a convincing argument for the identification of *all* the major animals in highland Chavín art as denizens of the tropical lowlands. These animals include the jaguar, the anaconda, the harpy eagle, the cayman, and the howler monkey. On the basis of these and other concerns, Lathrap concludes:

At the time of the emergence of Chavín as a pattern, the cultures of the eastern highlands and the lowland jungles were not yet fully differentiated, and were in a demonstrable sense still part of the same culture area or "interaction sphere." (1971a:97).

This is not to suggest that *all* of Chavín iconography is derived from the selva. Coastal sites like Garagay (Ravines 1975) portray crustacean and other sea-oriented creatures. If some of the curious Cupisnique Sechin-like steatite carved cups and bowls (Benson 1963:345, 346) of the North Coast are authentic, then the Cupisnique variant of Chavín art actually had acquired a maritime focus visible in its iconography not unlike that of the succeeding Mochica civilization of the same region. Nevertheless, because the highland sites are earlier than these coastal manifestations not directly connected with the origin of the style's original meaning. Instead I suggest that the earliest manifestations of Chavín art depict uniquely lowland fauna in ways that make it unmistakably clear that they were used as structural symbols in a cosmologic scheme of uncanny resemblance to the modern ethnographic one depicted in this book.

In organizing his original qualitative seriation of the Chavín pictorial style, Rowe (1967) identified changes in the construction stages of the main temple at Chavín correlated with the shifting

importance of two different cult figures: the earliest, the "Smiling God" (more appropriately designated the "Snarling God") represented by the Lanzón and the Tello Obelisk (Figure 11), and the later "Staff God" (and "Staff Goddess"). Lathrap (1973:96) then argued for an identification of the "Snarling God" with a dual set of figures he called the "Great Cayman of the Sky" and the "Great Cayman of the Earth" and for a congruence between the "Staff God" and the jaguar (1973:97)

Before inquiring into each of these identifications it is interesting to note that the first of Lathrap's dual figures corresponds with my dual Celestial and Subaquatic Dragons. His latter figure, the "Staff God," which Lathrap dealt with as a unity, we now know to have been a duality also because a female manifestation has now been recognized (Lyon 1979:99). The "Staff God" and "Staff Goddess" respectively align with my Yellow and Black Jaguars. How much do the functions deduced from the iconography of these figures correspond to the functions I have constructed for their modern counterparts? All the Chavín figures are true monsters (Rowe 1967:82). That is, each figure is a hybrid of various personage; the caymans are also part fish and snake; the jaguars are were-jaguars, human-feline composites. This stylistic convention corresponds to the similarly "architectural" way cosmic figures are constructed in the jungle as my use of the term *Dragon* for the cayman-anaconda-piranha composite indicates.

An early and exceptionally complex set of characters is represented by the Tello Obelisk (Figure 11). Following Lathrap's (1973) detailed decoding of this set of figures let me highlight both my agreement and my disagreement with portions of his reading. Both figures are clearly cayman complete with elongated head and splayed feet and legs (see Roe 1974:44, fig. 7e, for a naturalistic save for the bifid tongue, version of this figure). Yet it incorporates snake and fish elements, the most obvious of which is the tail, which is a fish and not a cayman tail. This is a true monster or Dragon and not a misunderstood naturalistic cayman. In actuality there are *two* profile caymans presented on either side of the stela. Lathrap's identification of the upper or A cayman as male based on the presence of a penis element in front of the hind leg (the snake head with manioc bush emerging from its mouth) seems secure, whereas his identification of the lower or B cayman as a female figure owing to the geometric form that figure carries in the same

position, is debatable but plausible. If these readings are correct we have here male and female aspects of the same mythological creature. In Lathrap's words:

There is direct evidence that the supreme being in the Chavín pantheon was a cayman, the tropical crocodilian of the Amazon and Orinoco Basins, who was originally worshipped as the master of fish. This prime entity, who was in a real sense the whole universe, was transformed into a sky deity and a deity of the water and underworld. The Sky Cayman became the basic rain god and the Water and Underworld Cayman the source of fecundity. Both were celebrated as donors of the major cultivated plants and of these gifts the most important was manioc….In the most explicit exemplification of the Great Cayman as donor of plants, the Obelisk Tello, our friend the bottle gourd, *aji*, achira, and the peanut were also given honorable mention. Maize receives no notice! (1977:741-742)

Vegetation grows from the corrugated backs of this figure just as on the crevassed hide of the Mexican *cipactli* (Thompson 1970:217). The bush emerging from the male cayman's penis Lathrap cogently identifies as manioc, while the element emerging from the nostrils of the small head at the hind foot of the female cayman he identifies as the bottle gourd and another small plant as *aji*. On the female figure B he picks out the correct (from the point of view of the model) underground food crop, *achira*. These identifications seem correct on the basis of the various plants' botanical characteristics; yet one presents an anomaly in that it *reverses* the expected associations. In the lowlands manioc, as an *under-ground* crop, is associated with women while *aji*, an *above-ground* crop (i.e., the edible portions), is associated with men. Yet here a female crop emerges from the penis of the male cayman. The same crossing over is found in the "companions" placed at the head of each figure. The fish (with canines, therefore probably a stylized piranha) associated with the female figure is correct in terms of the model, but the harpy eagle in front of that is not. It should be associated with the male or celestial figure, Cayman A. The Yellow Jaguar between the two figures perfectly fulfills its intermediary function (Lathrap 1973:97).

In short, the Tello Obelisk is a complete theogony. All the expected figures are shown on it, but some appear in a strangely scrambled order. I prefer to decode this interpenetration of symbols as a graphic instance of the overlapping categories of the

verbal forms in the myths. In other words, if both figures carried only their appropriate associations, then they would oppose each other too completely to show that they were really manifestations of the same figure rather than different entities. The system, to retain its dynamism, needs a partial overlapping of associations. If this position is correct, the Tello Obelisk is a very sophisticated monument that defies any mechanistic decoding yet hints at a subtle polysemy of symbolic values compatible with the principles and elements of the model.

The second Chavín supernatural (Figure 15) is altogether easier to decode in terms of the model. It is a were-jaguar figure. Note the feline mouth, the wrinkles over the nose, and the claws hands and feet. Yet it is outlined with vegetative-serpent bifid tongue symbols. They identify this feline figure with the underworld as against a contrasting figure (Figure 16) that does not have these vegetative features but retains the same feline characteristics. This different between these two depictions is congruent with an even more important distinguishing feature, the presence of the *vagina dentate* and the breasts kenned (see chap. 1) as eyes on the vegetative figure and the lack of these features on the non-vegetative figure. His girdle goes straight across his waist as it does on all other specimens of this type. Further, note the presence of biheaded snake staffs, an attribute of Páez jaguar deities. They are present on both depictions, indicating along with the similar front-face posture that these figures are closely related despite their differences. Because both figures are differentiated and affiliated at the same time, I argue that they are two manifestations of the same figure. Figure 15 is the Black Jaguar of feminine, underworld connotations; Figure 16 is the male, or Yellow Jaguar, of celestial connection in the model. These feline figures carry fewer attributes, and therefore fewer anomalies, than their caymanic kin. The only partial anomaly is the association of snake elements with the male jaguar. Yet as I have shown, the snake can also be of either sex and the snake is standard Chavín stylistic fare found on many different depictions. The presence of snakes on the male figure may also represent the same symbolic interpenetration as in the case of the cayman.

If these identifications are accepted then an interesting hypothesis can be formulated regarding theological evolution in Early Horizon Peru (Roe 1978a:22-27). Cordy-Collins (1976:50)

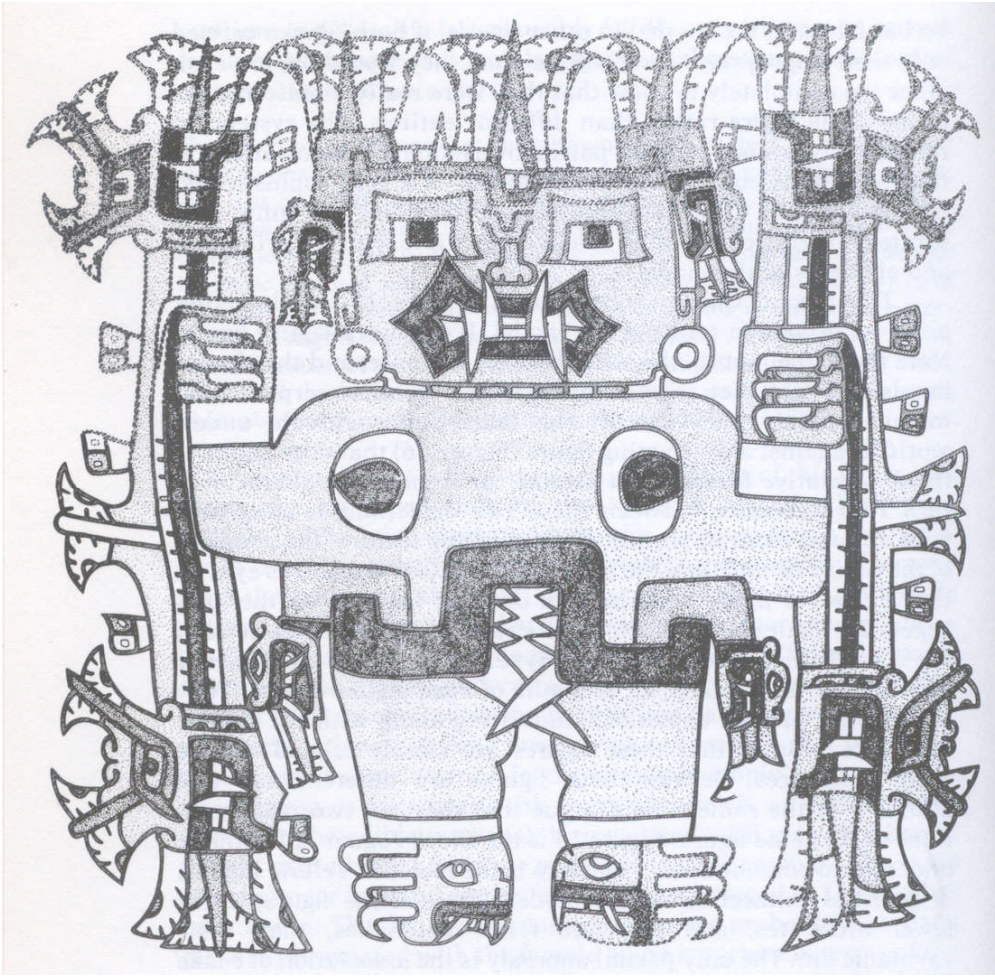


Figure 15.Chavin staff Goddess, karwa (Roe 1974:48, feg.6)

noted that the feline "Staff God"–"Staff Goddess" represents the single largest category of supernaturals found in the relatively late Phase D "Karwa" textiles. In addition, I argued in my refining of the Rowe Chavín seriation (Roe 1974) that most of the caymanic "Snarling God" figures are earlier, Phases AB-C. Therefore a picture emerges of a gradual but nearly complete shift in popularity

from the male-female cayman as a primary cult image to the jaguar "Staff God-Goddess," originally just an attendant-mediating figure. The increasingly anthropomorphized were-jaguar becomes the main image, perhaps in association with maize, while the old zoomorphic cayman, guardian and giver of root crops like manioc, fades. Not only does this parallel Soustelle's (1961:102-103) suggestion of the replacement of archaic earth deities with celestial deities in ancient Mexican systems; it also recapitulates a commonly recognized process of theological change in Old World Mediterranean civilizations.

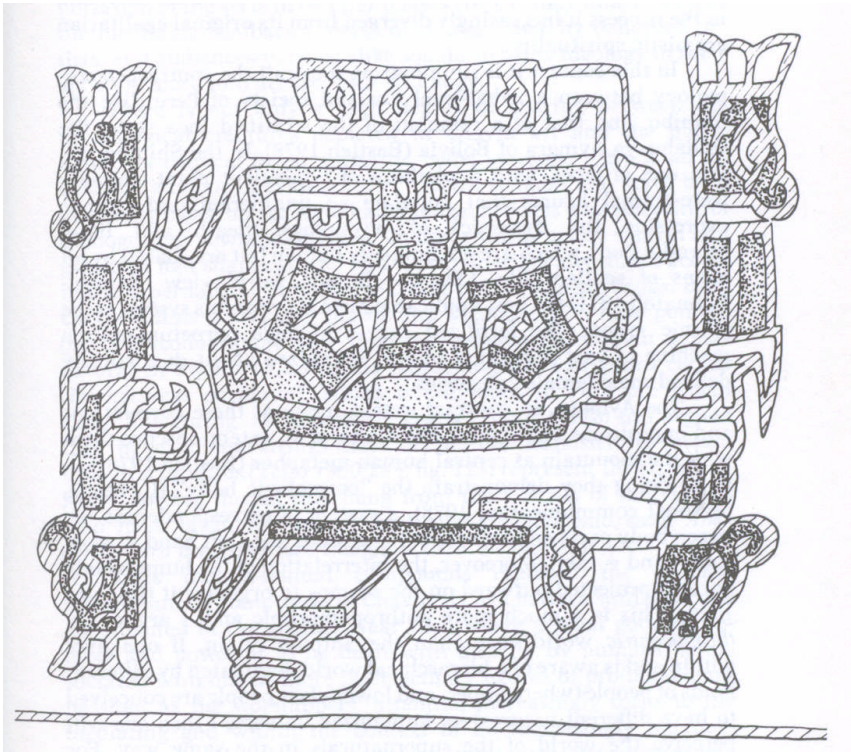


Figure 16. Chavín Staff God, karwa (Roe 1974:49, fig.15)

This trend in Chavín art is part of a pervasive and inreasing anthropomorphization of such associated figures as bird guardians (significantly falcons and harpy eagles) as the style evolved (Roe 1974:9). Purely animal forms are replaced, in time, by far more transparently human configurations. It is my thesis that the early stages of Chavín iconography represented an animistic world view carried over from the tropical forest tribal-level societies that today still retain that view. In a manner Swanson (1960) might have predicted, as Chavín social structure became increasingly hierarchical (more evidence of warfare, Swanson 1960:21), the style began to express stratified human power more directly, and in the process it increasingly diverged form its original egalitarian animistic spirituality.

In this context it is illuminating to recall the contrast in cosmology between a tribal-level lowland society of Peru, like the Shipibo, and that of a remnant of the stratified Inca state, the Qollahuaya Aymara of Bolivia (Bastien 1978). In the Shipibo system one is faced with a plethora of equivalent plant-animal-were-animal figures that populate an undifferentiated cosmos expressing the dynamics of physiology (death and life--reproduction), which are not uniquely human but are shared by all forms of sentient life. Like the Desana world view (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1971) the best applicable metaphor for this system is the cosmic zygote, the fertilized egg, a biologic perpetual-motion machine of vast pansexual import organized about dualistically defined male-female categories.

The Aymara, in contrast, retain many of these correlations and oppositions but overlay them and to an extent obscure them with the mountain as central human metaphor (Bastien 1978:37). In so doing they demonstrate the "cosmologic body" (C. Leslie, personal communication 1978), a system of correspondence between body parts and aspects of the cosmos (e.g., left hand = west/right hand = east). Moreover, the interrelation of the human body parts is projected outward on the cosmos to organize it (Douglas 1970). This is a much more anthropomorphic and, I argue, *anthropocentric* world view than the Shipibo retain. If one lives within and is aware of a hierarchical world dominated by different kinds of people (where upper- and lower-class people are conceived to have different natures)--a humanized universe--then one will perceive the world of the supernaturals in the same way. For example the Highland Quechua call their *Hacendado* overlords by

the same term, *Wamani*, that they call their mountain gods (Earls 1969:67).

Judged from this perspective, Chavín iconography seems to represent a case of culture lag in the early part of the sequence isasmuch as the ideological components of culture tend to change more slowly than the technoeconomic and social correlates (Adams 1974). Thus early Chavín art (Phases AB-C) may reflect a world view of shamanistic tropical forest tribal animism that no longer completely explained the altered social state of priests, classes, and kings that produced it. The increasing anthropomorphization of the style in its later phases (D-EF) may thus represent the inevitable feedback process of change whereby believers, artists, and audiences-patrons alike sought to bring ideology in their art style more into accord with sociology.

There is not only a high degree of sharing between the mythological creatures depicted in Chavín art and the major figures of tropical forest animistic belief systems; there is an increasing amount of evidence that Chavín religion may have been originally based on access to hallucinogenic drugs characteristic of ethnographic lowland religions. In other words before Chavín had priests it had shamans who had a characteristically direct access to the supernatural through the use of hallucinogenic drugs. Both Cordy-Collins (1977) and Sharon and Donnan (1977) have pointed out the iconographic fact that the were-jaguar Chavín supernatural in Figure 17 holds the hallucinogenic San Pedro cactus *(Trichocereus pachanoi),* which is still used in Peruvian North Coast folk curing. More recently Cordy-Collins (1978) has argued that the prominent strings that emerge from the nostrils of certain Chavín sculptures (Tello 1960:295, fig. 123) represent the strings of freely flowing mucus that hang from the nostrils of individuals who have taken the potent lowland hallucinogenic snuff *Anadenanthera peregrina* (see Chagnon 1976:17, fig. 1-5).

Thus human-animal compounds replaced the original animal-human composites in Chavín art in a pattern similar to one documented in the ancient Near East where a great god, too remote and powerful to be dealt with directly by humans, is associated with one or more intermediary figures of profound compassion. As the worshippers' attention increasingly turns to the mediating god within the context of an increasingly bureaucratized, hierarchical pantheon of supernaturals, the original god plays a lesser role and is represented in fewer ritual objects.

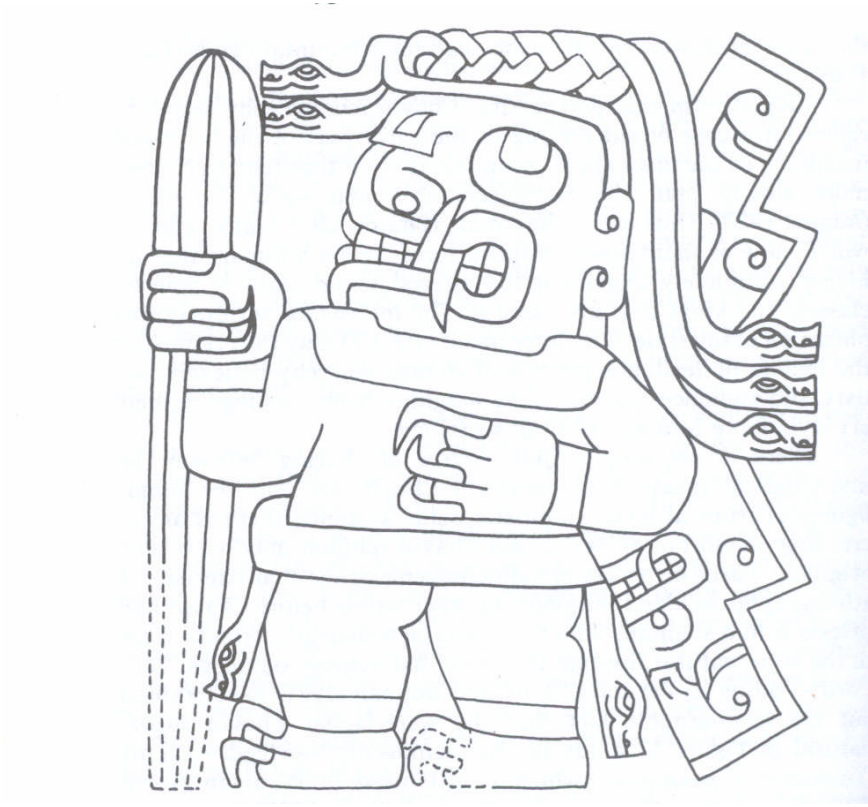


Figure 17. Chav'n God Carrying the San Pedro Cactus (Roe 1978:29, fig. La)

Lathrap (1977:717) sees this connection between Chavín and the lowlands as part of a larger story of the spread of a very early and effective pattern of root crop cultivation in the tropical forest of Amazonia and northern South America. Indeed the connections of culture and style reach far afield in this theory:

It is easy to show that this supreme cayman deity of Chavín religion was the same entity as Itzamná, the supreme deity of Maya religion…who was also initially a cayman, and who in his first transformation becomes a cayman of the sky and a cayman of the water and the underworld. The importance of this concept can be fully identified in Classic Maya art. It is equally obvious in Olmec art, and is abundantly illustrated in Izapa style,

the legitimate developmental link connecting Olmec to the later Classic and historic Maya. (1977:742)

Mesoamerica

Moving into Mesoamerica, Olmec civilization, contemporary with Chavín and probably the pristine state of Mesoamerica, seems to have played a role similar to Chavín's in Peru as originator of many long-enduring cultural configurations. Olmec appears to have originated either in the Tuxtla mountains or in the Veracruz-Tabasco region of the Mexican Gulf Coast around 1200 B.C. and to have endured until roughly 600 B.C. Olmecmonumental, as against portable, art is confined to the plazas and pyramids of the three great ceremonial centers of San Lorenzo, La Venta, and Tres Zapotes. San Lorenzo, the earliest, is characterized by a huge platform built on a natural eminence and adorned with hundreds of basalt sculptures. Ceremonial activities apparently ceased at the site around 950 B.C., and the monuments were mutilated and buried according to a deliberate plan. La Venta, situated on a small swampy island in Tabasco some 75 km. from San Lorenzo, was the next center to attain eminence. It has been dated to 800-400 B.C. La Venta is known for its huge irregularly shaped conelike pyramid and buried serpentine earth sculptures. When it too was destroyed, Tres Zapotes to the north then took the lead, and it is from there that the early bar-and-dot Long Count date of 31 B.C. comes (Willey 1966:98-99, 102-104).

Olmec art spread westward and northwestward across Puebla, Morelos, and Guerrero, apparently along with trading colonies specializing in the exchange of tropical commodities for highland jade (Joralemon 1971:5). In the highlands of Morelos and Guerrero the cave sites of Oxtotitlan and Chalcatzingo are oriented to these trade routes with the Gulf Coast. On the basis of this and other factors Grove (1970:32-34) argues that a dating of 900-700 B.C. for the Oxtotitlan paintings and the shift in power on the coast from San Lorenzo to La Venta. From this mountainous region of Mexico's Pacific Coast the style is found on the Pacific slopes of Guatemala and Salvador to the south. Isolated Olmec jades have even turned up as trade items as far south as Costa Rica (Balser 1958:5).

An understanding of Olmec iconography is complicated by the historical factor that the jaguar component of its refined

naturalistic art was at first given almost exclusive notice; "a were-jaguar, or anthropomorphized jaguar, was the central theme" (Willey 1966:99). Recently Luckert (1976:13) has asserted the opposite: that the jaguar seldom if ever appears and instead all depictions are of serpents. His best case for the snake identity of previously designated jaguar figures in Olmec art is the extraordinary La Venta buried earth sculpture, Mosaic Face 2. Originally described as a mosaic-pavement jaguar mask, Luckert argues that it is really a stylized but still recognizable depiction in green serpentine of the small green Central American rattler *Crotalus durissus* or the similar form that extends into South America, *Crotalus durissus terrificus*, the *cascabel*. Given my bias for the analogy in myth and art between specific living animals, their form, and their behavior and humans, I applaud his assertion that he is "now convinced that many so-called 'abstract' art forms of Middle America are realistic copies of divine animals which are still around" (Luckert 1967:24).

In terms of the model, note the correspondence of the color green with the subterranean realm both in this sculpture and in the later myths already explored. It might seem puzzling at first that such an elaborate piece of art was intentionally buried beneath the surface of the earth where no human could see it until one realizes that it was probably intended to commemorate the Subaquatic Dragon in whose realm it was placed.

In pursuing the Earth Dragon figure one notes that the World Tree concept may be present in Olmec art as well (Coe 1972:9) and that as a Dragon Tree it is associated with underground plants. I have already shown that the relative unimportance of manioc in Central America resulted in the bifurcation of the role of corn, the immature "green" plant being associated with the underworld and serpents, the mature or "yellow" stage being linked with males and the sun. Therefore Luckert's analogizing between the bifid form of the serpent's tongue and the shape of young maize shoots (1976:66-67, figs. 18, 19) seems attractive, especially given the mater Aztec association of maize with the rattlesnake *Chicomalotzin* (1976:69, fig. 121). He further makes the case that mountains are serpents' bodies and that the mouth of a volcano, which the main pyramid at La Venta may have symbolized, represents the serpents devouring mouth. In Luckert's poetic vision he state:

In the beginning of the Olmec World was the great Earth Serpent--or several serpent manifestations. The Earth Serpent raised his volcanic

heads, and from the open mouths at the top of these volcanic heads rose smoke. Fiery streams of lava flowed from these mouths and split. Clouds formed above their craters and calderas. In thin serpentine streaks fell the rain, and, uniting with greater snakelike rivulets, the rushing waters periodically washed heaps of volcanic ash and cinders down and outward on the alluvial fans (1976:70)

From the point of view of the South American data, Luckert makes the further felicitous association of the dual aspect of the serpent--phallus and vagina--by noting that women may have been identified with the serpent's mouth via the *vagina dentata* motif (1976:67-68). A famous Olmec relief, Chalcatzingo Relief I (Figure 12a) seems to corroborate these associations. Whether it is adjudged a volcanic earth serpent lying on its side and spouting smoke and fumes (1976:46) or a stylized cave in the form of a serpent's mouth as I view it, either interpretation links it with both serpents and the earth. In fact the Warao *Urupare* myth (Armellada and Napolitano 1975:132-133) of a man being swallowed by a huge serpent-Dragon, the bringer of tempest and rains, might best account for the symbolism shown in this basalt relief. In this Olmec depiction a priest is shown seated on a (snake) scroll and, holding another one, is contained within the huge U-shaped mouth of a serpent with plants sprouting from its jaws and vapor or smoke issuing forth, kenned as a bifid tongue from its mouth. Above, triple-tiered cumulus cloud symbols emit stylized rain. Though this is normally called a "jaguar-monster" (Grove 1972:160), I agree with Luckert that it looks like a snake.

If so, then Figure 12b, the Chalcatzingo Relief IX, offers a problem, for it clearly represents the same beast, complete with lined jaw and vegetative symbols; yet it has a cat's nose. It appears, full-face, at least as much a feline as it is a serpent. In my model one way to reconcile these difficulties is to identify it as the typically Mesoamerican Black Jaguar aspect of the Dragon.

Yet, as these two reliefs show, too exclusive a connection with the earth world would not do justice to the Olmec serpent's dualistic aspects. Thompson (1970-269), for example, stresses the Olmec origin of the rain cult--world and directional indicators developed from snakes and other ophidian imagery--to indicate that a balanced and partitioned world view in which cells are created that must be filled by contrasting figures is at least as old as Olmec. A key figure in this discussion of dualism is the Olmec "Dragon" from Painting I-C at Oxtotitlan (Figure 18). As Grove (1970:16)



Figure18. Olmec Dragon, Oxtotitlan Painting I-c (Grove 1970:16 fig. 12)

noted, this agnathous (and therefore caymanic, Lathrap 1971b) figure shows that both *cipactli* and "feathered serpent," or Celestial Dragon, traits. The *cipactli* is the later Aztec Subaquatic Dragon (Hunt 1977:75).

Related to this effort of teasing out the features of Olmec mythical personages is Joralemon's (1971) study in which he identified 10 of the most prominent Olmec gods based on an exhaustive iconographic and stylistic analysis. Although his analysis may be a bit too fine-grained in that he has indicated by the use of letter subscripts figures what may be merely different manifestations of the same figure, I nevertheless use his system in the following discussion. Lathrap (1971b) is probably right in equating his God I-A with the Celestial Dragon and not the jaguar (Joralemon 1974:35). His God VIII, the Feathered Serpent (1971:82), plays a somewhat similar role and perhaps can be identified with Venus as it was in ethnohistorical times. If God I-A is the Celestial Dragon, then Joralemon's God I-B (1971:49) is the subterranean Subaquatic Dragon complete with vegetative symbols. God IV is the subterranean dwarf companion of this figure, and Joralemon (1971:71) is probably correct in identifying him with rain (1971:90).

Yet not even Luckert (1976) can explain away all the jaguar characteristics in Olmec art. His Figure 2 from Necaxa, Puebla, a "tiger-mouth jade figuring" that was the basis of Vaillant's original designation of the ocelot or jaguar as central in Olmec art, is a transparent were-feline figure. Its position has nothing snakelike about it, the figure being crouched with hands forming a fist so that the knuckles look like paws and having a snarling, albeit toothless, mouth. This type of sculpture is linked to a carving from

the Gulf Coast of a jaguar having sexual relations with a woman (Stirling 1955:8). Both Stirling (1955:19-20) and Coe (1965:14) have related this depiction to the mythical creation of were-jaguar children through the primordial intercourse of the first woman with a jaguar. Reichel-Dolmatoff (1972b:58) shows the clear South American affinities of this belief and the parallels between the Mexican *chaneques* (dwarfish beings who live in cascades and sexually persecute women) and the Páez Thunder Jaguars (who do the same thing). We have actual pictorial proof the sexual congress of human and jaguar, only this time with the sexes reversed, in the famous Oxtotitlan Paintingn I-D (Figure 19). Here, instead of a male



Figure 19. Olmec Standing Man and Jaguar, Oxtotitlan Painting I-D (Grove 1970:17, fig. 13)

jaguar dominating a woman, a man is dominating a female jaguar. In the painting a *black painted* man with a drooping erection salutes with raised right hand a spotted jaguar, which rears away from him on its hind legs, its tail sprouting from his loins. The jaguar has curious scrolled detailing in the pelvic area that looks like a vaginal canal. As Grove notes, "a sexual union between the two is undoubtedly illustrated" (1970:17-18). Coe (1972) equates the jaguar cult with the ruling strata in Olmec society, and this painting certainly seems a social charter.

Such monuments as Altar 5 from La Venta (Willey 1966:100) show priests carrying the struggling tiger-faced dwarfish issue. Both of Coe's explanations for their peculiar appearance--the notch in their heads replicating the furrow running down the middle of the jaguar's scalp or being the exaggeration of the incomplete closure of the skull bones in certain birth deformities--may be right. In the cognate systems of South America deformed children are often thought to be the monster children of women who have had sex with supernatural (sometimes jaguar) spirits. Instead of killing them, as is common in the South American lowlands, the Olmec could have made a cult of them connected with the underground = rain Black (licentious) Jaguar.

As in South America this notion could be related to the concept of shamanistic transformation as Furst (1968) and Grove (1972:155) suggest, because hallucinogens, that mainstay of South American lowland shamanism, appear to have been present with or outside of the still-differentiating Olmec priesthood. Figure 20, Oxtotitlan Relief III, seems to show a cat (probably a puma) licking what could be a hallucinogenic cactus. Chalcatzingo Relief IV (Figure 21) shows what may be the later, paranoid stages of a drug experience where jaguars consume the living body of the celebrant (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1972a).

Last, as an associate of the jaguar we have the harpy eagle, another lowland South American denizen. Lathrap (1971b) is correct in identifying Joralemon's God III eagle (1971:67) with the harpy eagle. Joralemon's description of that eagle's probably function as "the messenger or perhaps the harbinger of the great fire deity" (1971:90) also echoes its South American role. Figure 22, which Grove (1970:9), its discoverer, identifies as the screech owl with large eye and feathered "horns," may also be the crested harpy eagle. If this bird is an eagle, as its recurved beak and long, powerful wing feathers indicate, then it could be seated on the

jaguar, its South American associate in its Yellow phase. If the bird is an owl, then it is seated on the Black Jaguar.

Lathrap (1971b) synthesizes these two conflicting tendencies by pointing out that the identification of the jaguar with the Olmec ruling house may have skewed the various aspects of their ideological heritage by deemphasizing the Dragon in the lowlands of Veracrus, where, if it functioned as a rain deity, rain would never have been a problem. That original heritage continued to be important in the highlands of Morelos-Guerrero, where the Dragon could have helped as a rain god in an area where rainfall is occasionally below that needed for secure agriculture.

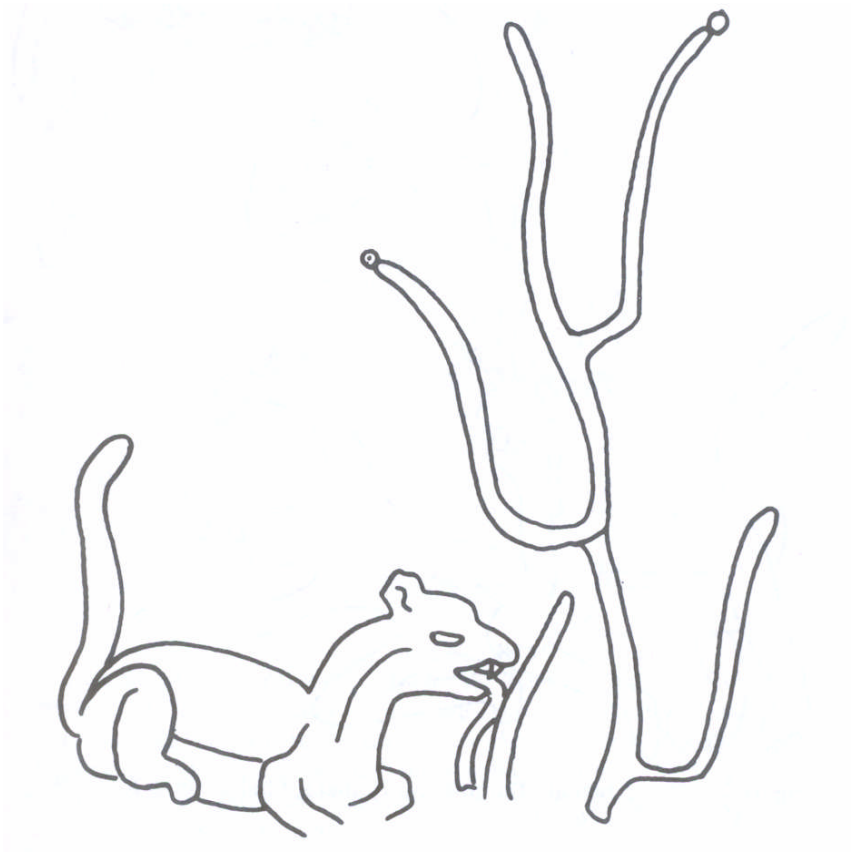


Figure 20. Olmec Jaguar Licking a Cactus, Oxtotitlan Relief III (Joralemon 1971:88, fig. 260)

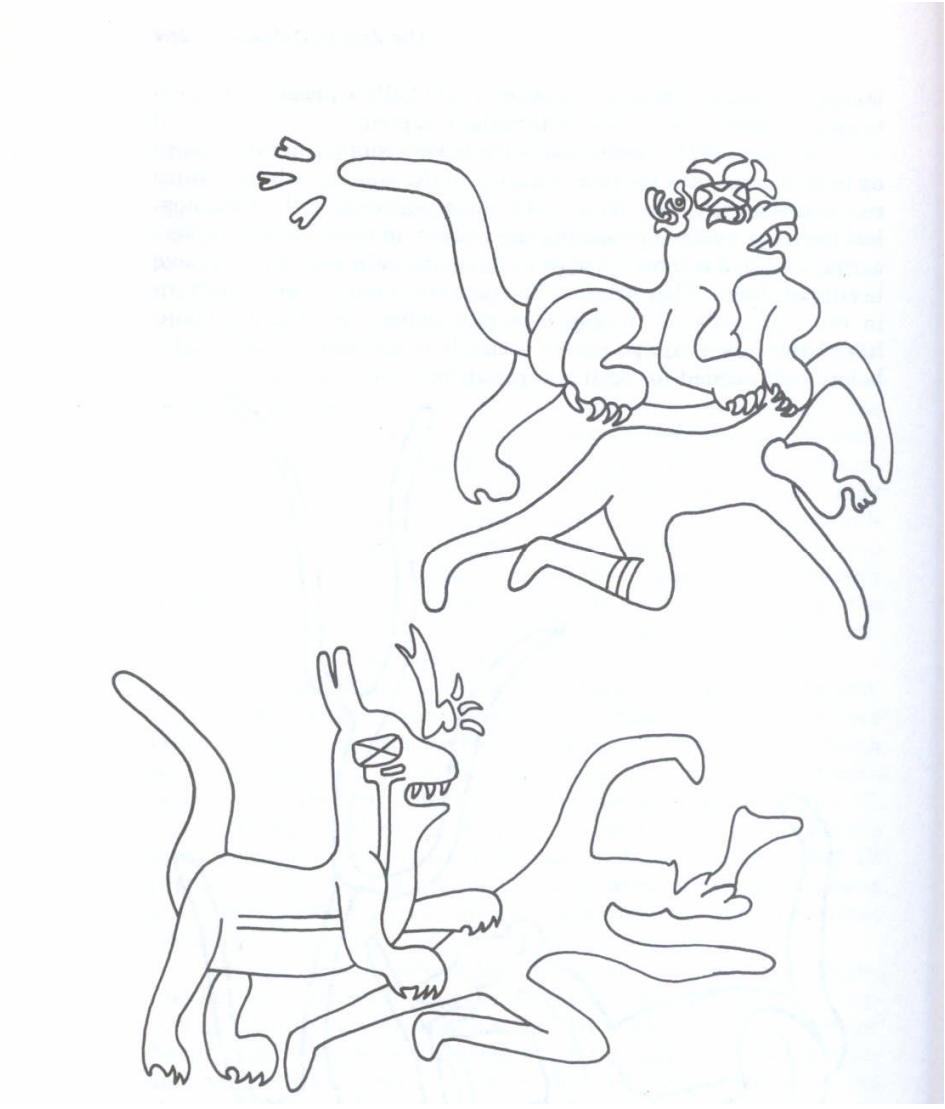


Figure 21. Olmec Jaguars Dominating Humans, Chalcatzingo Relief IV (Grove 1972:156, fig. 2)

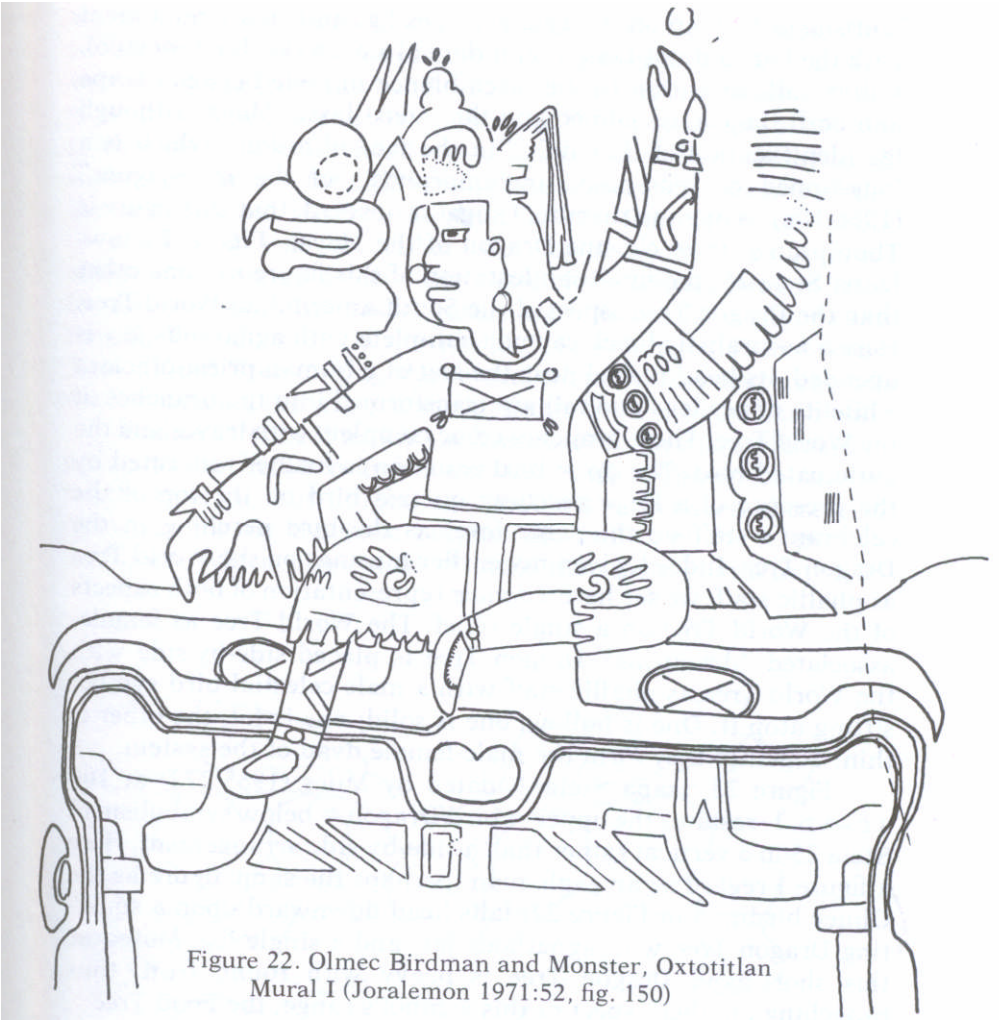


Figure 22. Olmec Birdman and Monster, Oxtotitlan Mural I (Joralemon 1971:52, fig. 150)

As already mentioned, the major connecting link between Olmec and the later Maya culture was the Izapa style. Though no mere passive transmitter of the Olmec themes (Quirarte 1973:32), the Izapa style clearly added onto a basic Olmec heritage and transmitted to later civilizations the resultant composite. This monumental art style, similar to the Olmec art of Tres Zapotes, has been found on the coastal plain of Chiapas at the eponymous site and also in the Guatemalan highlands of Kaminaljuyu. The impor-

tant site of El Baúl on the Pacific slopes has an Izapan monument with the bar-and-dot Long Count date of A.D. 36 (Willey 1966:106). Willey calls attention to the resemblance in style between Izapa and both the earlier Olmec and the later Classic Maya, although his identification of that link, "in the face of a deity which is a long-lipped or long-nosed metamorphosis of the man-jaguar" (1966:106), is open to dispute. I suggest, instead, that this figure is Thompson's *Itzam Na*, the Dragon of the Mayas. Figure 7 shows Izapa Stela 25, the first manifestation of this figure as none other than the Dragon Tree aspect of the South Amerindian World Tree. Here a naturalistic black cayman complete with agnathous jaw is upended, its head placed near the feet of a human priest-officiant while its upper legs and tail are transformed into the branches of the World Tree. These branches come complete with leaves and the anticipated bird. The up = bird equation is further reiterated by the presence of a huge perching quetzál bird on the top of the celebrant's staff on the same level as the bird perching in the Dragon Tree. Indeed, given my earlier musings on the World Tree as phallic staff, we see here a *double* representation of both aspects of the World Tree on a single relief. The World Tree as a female-associated "devouring" Dragon Tree is placed side-by-side with the World Tree as phallic staff with a male celestial bird symbol sitting atop it. One is hollow, one is solid; one is fat, the other is thin. Together they form the male-female dyad of the system.

Figure 23, Izapa Stela 2, dated by Miles (1965:273) at 100 B.C.-A.D. 1, restates the upper = bird/Dragon = below symbolism of Stela 25 in a vertical rather than a side-by-side arrangement. Here a figure I regard as an eagle-man (perhaps the same figure as the Olmec birdman in Figure 22) falls head downward upon a squatting Dragon Tree with agnathous jaw and a single leg. Moreover this short-hand Dragon Tree is heavy with round fruit, thus broaching another aspect of this symbol's range, the Food Tree.

The caymanic or aquatic associations of the World Tree are reinforced in Figure 24, Izapa Stela 1, dated by Miles (1965) at ?-400 B.C. It shows an agnathous-mouthed anthropomorphic figure with possible clouds of water vapor or even, given Luckert's arguments, plumes of volcanic fire emanating from his mouth. He holds a latticework basket in which an aquatic creature is found and from which pours water. Given the South Amerindian data this may be a ritualized fish-poisoning act. On his back the principal figure also carries a basket with water flowing from it. The

water enters the earth below his agnathously kenned feet. This subterranean stream comes complete with naturalistic fish. The water pouring from his hand and his back baskets forms a *U* enclosing the figure in aquatic symbolism. The central sash of his loin cloth ends in a snake head, restating the model's association of snake = cayman = fish. This stela can be interpreted cosmically as the underground river of the dead flowing from its initial pools of entry and exit on either side of the earth by a now-anthropomorphized Dragon surrogate of the central Dragon Tree. He carries fish in his basket rather than fish in his belly, as the Dragon Tree does. He is the World Tree = Dragon Tree = Food Tree = Staff Tree uniting the central planes of the Izapa cosmos while providing the water that courses through its veins like blood.

Badner (1972:23) makes the best case for specific stylistic correspondences between Izapa and the earlier Chavín culture of South America, but I think the similarities between these two styles are mostly thematic because the syntax of the respective traditions, which gives each of them their own character, is so

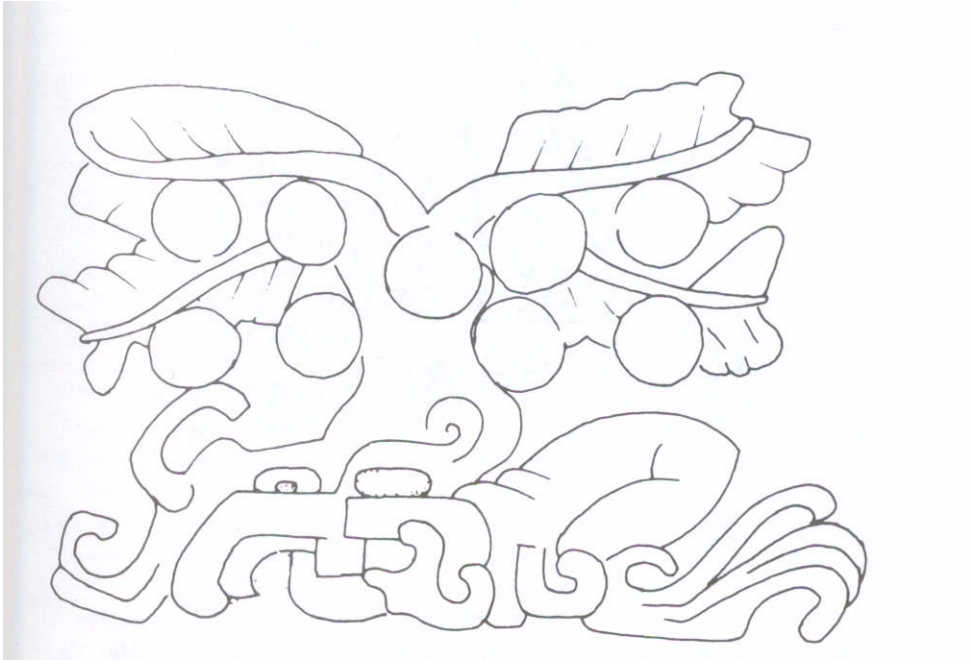


Figure 23. Izapa Dragon Tree with Fruit, Stela 2 (Badner 1972:35, fig. 20)



Figure 24. Izapa Crocodilian water Pourer, Stela 1 (Willey 1966: 106, fig. 3-36)

different. Thus, when evaluating the semantic congruences among Chavín, Olmec, and Izapa, I follow Willey (1962:5) in seeing them as geographically distant manifestations of the same archaic or formative cultural cosmologic base. Lathrap (1977:742-744) makes an even stronger case based on the analysis of art styles, shared horticultural systems, and the identification of certain South Amerindian languages as developmental from Proto-Mayan. He suggests contiguous ethnic groups located in "the alluvial lowlands of northern Colombia" moving north and south respectively to form the ancestral protocommunities of Olmec-Izapa and Chavín. In essence this position is an end run around the difficult-to-prove thesis of direct diffusion. It provides a mechanism for the shared conceptual scheme of Willey. Whether the "strong" or the "weak" reconstruction of the iconographic similarities between these ancient styles and the modern ethnographic cosmos I have sketched prove to be correct, the detailed nature of the similarities necessitates some form of shared cosmos.

Successor Cultures in Peru and Adjacent Lands

Having compared, however sketchily, the fate of the model in the early styles of Mesoamerica, I now need to return to the highlands and coast of South America to see how post-Chavín styles handled its basically jungle-oriented themes. Appropriately midway between the Olmec and Chavín florescences but with no clear stylistic link to either one of them (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1972c:120) is the monumental stone sculpture and associated tumuli and cist graves of the San Augustín culture. These sculptures of somewhat crude cast are found in a large complex of sites in the Colombian highlands at the headwaters of the Magdalena River. The chronology of the culture is very tentative, the earliest C-14 dates at the site ranging into the sixth century B.C. Maximum population growth; architectural activity; and the appearance of intrusive, perhaps southern (Ecuadorian-Peruvian) ceramic traits--shallow bowls with negative-resist decoration and double-spout-and-bridge bottles--all are associated with the Isnos Period (1972c:119). The Isnos Period may correlate with some of the stone sculpture. If so, that indicates a continued occupation into the fourth and fifth centuries A.D. (1972c:120).

San Augustín stone sculpture reveals a few traits that Reichel-Dolmatoff has related to tropical forest mythology and

that are consonant with my model. One of them is the presence of the ubiquitous feline mouth with prominent canines. (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1972b:52) that indicate supernatural status for the were-animal figures. There are also statues that show the alter-ego motif stages within the shaministic transformation of humans into animals via the ritual use of hallucinogens (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1972c:108, fig. 75). A jaguar overpowering a woman and holding onto a small child on her back (1972c:61, fig. 31) could relate to the original rape of a woman by a jaguar that Reichel-Dolmatoff has used to illuminate the Olmec data. In addition, many of the San Augustín figures grasp staffs (1972c:99, fig. 67) that jaguar figures wrest from each other in Páez mythology. In short, the intermediary archaeological evidence from San Augustín shows the same marked tropical forest influences I have noted for the ethnographic groups of the Colombian Andes while it reflects mythical themes from far to the south (Chavín feline mouths) and the north (Olmec jaguar children).

The same theme of a shamanistic protective alter ego is foundn in the highland and coastal cultures of Recuay and Gallinazo, which flourished in the Peruvian highlands and coast after the collapse of Chavín power to the south (Benson 1974:7). This could represent a new infusion of tropical forest traits inasmuch as the notion was not present in Chavín art (1974:7). These cultures--particularly Recuay in its preference for negative-resist decoration--show intrusive Ecuadorian highland affinities and therefore pertain to a world not far removed from San Augustín. The alter ego theme is also present in the Vicus culture (1974:9) and in the early and related Moche I style of the northern Peruvian coast (1974:10). By Moche IV times this symbolism changes; the jaguar clearly pounces upon and bites a naked and bound human prisoner (1974:20), reflecting a progression from egalitarian shamanism to hierarchical conquest-based superiority within the Moche state.

The Mochica (Moche) culture is a direct descendant of the Chavín heritage found on the arid Peruvian North Coast and mediated only by the brief Gallinazo-Salinar interregnum. Its beginning date can be placed in the late first century B.C., and its end is found in the mid-eighth century A.D. (Benson 1972:10). It was an aggressive and expanding militaristic state or set of states based on irrigation agriculture. The Moche achievement is characterized by sophisticated pottery, metallurgy, and the erection of huge

adobe pyramids. Benson (1972:16) hypothesizes that the Mochica state may have originated in the unexplored area between the Piura and Chicama valleys or even in the Piura area itself. Meanwhile the Gallinazo style endured in the Viru Valley to the south long after the Moche style was established in the Chicama and Moche valleys (1972:16).

The Moche culture continues the Chavín preoccupation with the jaguar, chiefly in the presence of the jaguar's snarling mouth, which, as in the older style, marks the special status of human and nonhuman supernaturals. Moche art also adds evidence of a new lowland element (perhaps present before but never clearly shown): the man-jaguar transformation. Figure 25 shows a man-jaguar composite figure opposing his prey, the deer, while above him looms a serpent. The body of the figure is a naturalistic cat complete with spotted jaguar pelt and clawed extremities. Only the head is recognizably human, although even it carries the jaguar's snarling mouth. The scene painted here represents the middle



Figure 25. Mochica Were-jaguar (Kutscher 1954:74, A)

stage in the transformation process referred to in the Páez myths wherein humans change into jaguars and vice versa, perhaps in the context of the use of hallucinogenic drugs (cats are depicted with cacti, some of which could be San Pedro).

Moche pottery is graced with perhaps the most complete record of life ways, from technology and warfare to sexual habits and theology, of any prehistoric culture. Yet because the Moche lacked writing, the message these extraordinarily vivid pots convey remains enigmatic. We only have written records for the Chimu, their Late Intermediate descendants, as recorded by the missionary Antonio de Calancha after both Inca and Spanish conquests. Though the Chimu were related to the Moche, as the Moche were to Chavín, there will always be the problem of whether Chimu beliefs can be legitimately ascribed to the Moche as well (Grieder 1975). Nevertheless I opt for continuity and so refer to the Moche iconographic evidence using the Chimu data. Otherwise one must depend on what scholars like Benson, Donnan, and Kutscher have done to decode the iconographic evidence, always a risky and indeterminate process open to many conflicting interpretations.

One of the major mythological figures of the Moche was a deity called *Ai Apaec* (or *Ai-Apec*) after the Chimu name for the figure. As Benson describes him:

An anthropomorphic deity with feline canines and snakes emerging from its belt appears in Chavín art, and some descendant of this deity (if it was not assumed to be the same deity who had earlier been worshiped in the mountains) was taken over or inherited by other Peruvian peoples, including the Mochica on the North Coast. The Mochica deity had--in addition to the feline canines and the snake belt--round, wide-open eyes, snakehead earrings, and, most commonly, a headdress with a jaguar head at the front. (1972:24)

Having already seen how staring eyes are a jaguar trait, all one needs to add to this description is the presence of a heavily lined face on this figure--perhaps indicative, given the model, of the superfluity of vital force he possesses. I call this figure the "Tusked God" after his formidable canines. Though often referred to as one god of obvious mountain or highland associations (Sawyer 1966:52-53), *Ai-Apec* is clearly more than one deity. He would benefit from a Joralemon-like stylistic decoding to tease out all the different deities or aspects of a set of deities hiding behind a bewil

dering wardrobe of kilts, togas, breastplates, and headdresses (Figure 26). Benson has begun such a task by distinguishing two figures within the Tusked God complex:

I am assuming a single deity, although this was undoubtedly a dual, if not a tripartite, deity--that is, there was a god-the-father and god-the-son, if not god-the-father and twin sons. God-the-father was presumably a creator god, the god of the sky, the sun, and the mountains…[of] fresh water, of the rivers that came down from the mountains to make agriculture possible in the coastal desert. God-the-son was an active god, most frequently depicted fighting the battles of the coastal people; he was the super-Mochica who fished or fought a shark-monster or a crab-monster. He probably came down from the mountains and was another aspect of the supreme creator god. (1972:24)

I utilize this system based as it is on the following stylistic aspects:



Figure 26. Sun Jaguar Manifestation of the Mochia God Ai-Apec (Kutscher 1950: 122, fig. 7)

The creator god is shown frontally and symmetrically, wearing a sunrise headdress and staring off into space, whereas the active god is in profile, has knees bent in action, wears trunks rather than a long garment, and wears a simple jaguar headdress rather than the sunrise version. (Benson 1972:28)

I further identify the "creator god" with the sun, not only because he wears a helmet that shows the rays of a rising sun but because he emerges from a cave in the side of a puma- or jaguar-paw range of mountains with two jaguar-snake heads peering out on each side of him. In a good depiction (1972:29, fig. 2-2) his "son," whom I identify with the Yellow Jaguar sun intermediary, is on the side of the mountain also peering at him. I use the highland data (Zuidema 1964:143) to suggest that this depiction shows the rising sun, emerging fully formed from the exit of the underworld--a cave--in the east prior to beginning his celestial voyage across the sky. Frequent depictions of the sun god show him in full toga seated beneath the mountain while women sacrifices with falling hair are thrown down near him (Benson 1972:28, fig. 2-1; Tello 1924, lámina 280), perhaps to "energize" the sun so that he can begin his movement. The mountain can also be of maize cobs (Benson 1972:29, fig. 2-4), for his head is shown emerging from a pile of corn cobs, thus associating this masculine, solar god with maize, as the model predicts.

His divine intermediary, the Yellow Jaguar (god-the-son), is also shown on mountain substitutes--pyramid step-scrolls--in the same act, but his onlooker is the lizard (Kutscher 1954:79, figs. b,d). This is anomalous because the lizard is an associate of the Subaquatic Dragon in its seductive (H. Buechler and J.-M. Buechler 1971:32, on the Aymara) and libidinous (Holmberg 1957) connotations. Yet in a nonanomalous way, the bird headdress the lizard wears represents a vulture (Benson 1972:35, fig. 2-9), an animal congruent with the lizard in its symbolism. The Yellow Jaguar (god-the-sun) acts in an acceptable fashion when he has intercourse with a female (earth?) deity aided by the appropriately solar-associated hummingbird while the lizard looks on, perhaps as an attendant of the female (Benson 1975:110, fig. 3). God-the-son also acts according to the model when he subdues evil *aquatic* spirits (Figure 26). At the same time this depiction indicates a more maritime orientation in Moche art than was present in highland Chavín art. On the other hand this orientation toward the sea may just be a direct intensification of the maritime themes of Cupisnique art, the antecedent coastal Chavín manifestation.

This coastal orientation could be the reason for the appearance of a new supernatural in late Moche times (or actually the new importance of an old figure). Ubbelohde-Doering (1954) first identified this figure with the moon god *Si* of Antonio de la Calancha's chronicle. According to that account of the coastal Chimu civilization, the kingdom of Chimor, they differed from the highland Inca, who worshiped the sun, by worshiping the moon. Although male, this god was associated with the sea, an expectable linkage. Iconographically this god is the "Radiant God" or the "God of the Aureole" (Kutscher 1950:123) from the rays that surround his body and end in little snake heads (snake = moon). Benson describes him thus:

He wears a warrior's dress and helmet with a knife, and has radiances that often end in snake heads projecting from his body. His armor seems to reflect an increasing spirit of Mochica militarism….Like the fanged god, he also has feline dentition and is sometimes accompanied by a jaguar. He is always associated either with a litter or a raft. (1972:39)

I identify this figure, because of its feline associations, as the Black Moon Jaguar, an appropriately bloodthirsty creature. This identification depends on the acceptance of the association of the figure with the "moon monster" that frequently predates it in early Mochica and Recuay pottery. This is a feline, in one case a transparent jaguar, and, significantly, is in most cases painted black. It is shown "riding" inside a crescent moon and surrounded by star-like symbols (Kutscher 1954: figs. 44, A, B). This transition is a clear case of the lunar Black Jaguar anthropomorphizing into a human jaguar according to the same logic used in the Chavín sequence. If so, one can approach a complex scene of Mochica iconography involving the Black Moon Jaguar god, a "presentation theme" (Donnan 1975) with a hope of decoding its symbolism.

Figure 27 shows this moon god of the aureole. The first image one notices is the huge double-headed serpent that horizontally divides the scene. Benson calls this a "sky monster," indicating the demarcation between earth and sky (Benson 1972:44). From other depictions that show it arched over a supplicant who stands on the ground (Kutscher 1950:122, fig. 5) and from the abundant lowland data, we know that the "sky monster" is the rainbow, the double-headed serpent of the sky, and a manifestation of the Dragon. So far the equation seems correct--Dragon = rainbow = moon--and to it can be added the equally congruent association, drugs = Dragon = rainbow = moon, as that depiction shows ritual coca

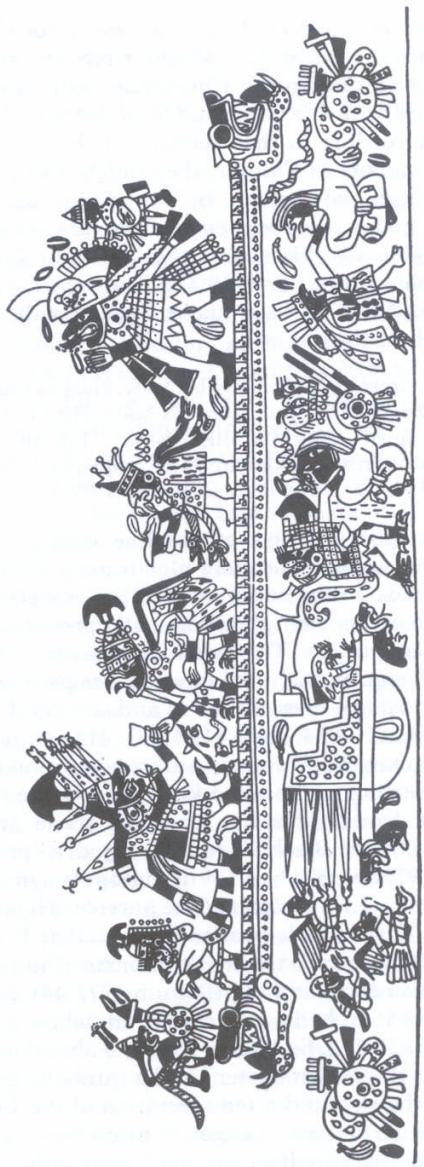


Figure 27. Mochica Black Jaguar Moon God *Si* (Kutscher 1950:123, fig. 8)

Figure 27. Mochica Black Jaguar Moon God *Si* (Kutscher 1950:123, fig. 8)

taking. The moon has left his litter below (in the underworld?), where its rails are also double-headed serpents. Below, next to the litter, a demon and a human tear out the hearts of bound human prisoners. Above the rainbow, in the night (?) sky, we see the moon being offered a drink over the body of a small jaguar. An anthropomorphized hawk is offering it to him, the same hawk who can later ride in the litter in the absence of the moon (Kutscher 1954:79, fig A). This is another anomaly, as was the lizard, because hawks are associated with the sun in the model. The matter is complicated, however, because this is a complex scene; the sun is also present. I interpret the figure who approaches behind the hawk with a "prayer" gesture to be the solar creator god (god-the-father). Thus we see the sun paying homage via his bird intermediary to the moon when the moon has replaced him on his celestial travels. Paranthetically this scene may also depict the emerging preeminence of the lunar god over the solar god in later Mochica theogony.

If a specific scene decodes well, general themes may do so also--ones present in many different scenes. I have already associated, as in the lowlands, drug (coca) taking as metaphorical death with the rainbow. Benson concurs in associating the cult of coca with death (1974:29). Women are further associated with that symbol of death, the owl (Sharon and Donnan 1974:53, on the Trujillo Mestizo), and the owl with powerful "medicines," one of which could have been coca.

The image of decay in life and vitalism in death from lowland cosmology is nowhere better stated visually than in Mochica art (Benson 1972:154, 1975:140). This dualism is shown particularly well in a symbol the Desana would view with the same ambivalence: the phallus. In Moche pottery the penis, symbol of fertility and lifle, has a human face modeled on its shaft, beneath which the testicles are the folded knees of a complete human figure, usually in "prayer" pose. Why is the male face modeled on the phallus figurine always so heavily lined (Benson 1972:142; Tello 1924, lámina 277)? The generative organ-man is so *old* because of that lowland equation, excessive generative power = mortality. Similarly, as if to repeat the rather puritanical sentiments of the Desana, many of the so-called pornographic pots may actually have been severe moral lessons on the sanctity of the marriage rules at the same time that they counseled fecundity. A naturalistic woman masturbates a skeletal man, defleshed save for his member (Ben-



Figure 28. The Devil's *Gateway*

son 1972:139) in a structurally perfect inversion of the Christian European conception of the late 16th-century artist Abraham Bloemart shown in Figure 28. In that depiction of the Devil's Gateway, a naturalistic man makes love to a skeletalized woman. Whatever or whoever possesses the vital force in abundance, these

disparate examples seem to say, should also exhibit, in a transparent (i.e., skeletal) fashion, the ephemerality of its vigor.

Rather than go into the iconography of the succeeding Huari-Tiahuanaco empires of around A.D. 1000 (a difficult task in any case, given their stylized nature), I merely point out that this set of styles carries on many of the themes of Chavín art such as staff gods and winged-bird guardian figures. Similar things can be said about the Late Intermediate styles such as Chimu that lead into the time frame of Inca civilization already investigated ethnohistorically. Suffice it to say that archaeological evidence, however tentative, seems to indicate a world not unlike that seen from the ethnographic evidence of the same and neighboring areas and gives a very respectable antiquity of some 3,000 years for growth and development of the cosmic zygote.

Conclusions

After viewing this motley zoological parade across centuries and between regions, one asks oneself why there are so many figures in South Amerindian mythology. They all seem to fulfill very much the same function. Why are not just the most impressive figures like the jaguar and the cayman the sole occupants of the mythical stage, endlessly repeating their same messages in myriad episodes? For example there is the anaconda, who plays a malignant, disruptive, animalistic role in many stories connected with the dire consequences of untamed sexuality. But there is also the tapir, the maned wolf, the frog, the Black Jaguar, the cayman, the anteater, and the piranha, to name only a few, who have functions in the stories quite closely overlapping those of the anaconda. One expects mythical redundancy, but why so much?

One answer may lie in the fact that the minor figures that cluster about the major figures refine the dominant symbol's meaning by extending it into new realms of mythical action where the major figure could not naturalistically penetrate. For example one finds the tapir playing the aquatic seducer role of the Dragon when the action takes place on land. Land is clearly a foreign element for the anaconda but not for the tapir. Similarly, the meaning of the dominant symbols is extended by having animals of different appearance take over some of their roles. This allows a

dominant symbol to take on new meanings such as humor in the anteater's altering of the sinister anaconda's function.

This explanation may be true, but I do not think it is the whole answer. There is another explanation that could act in tandem to provide the multitudinous cast of characters of the myths. It may have something to do with the theory of metaphoric replacement outlined in the introduction of this work: the need for metaphoric novelty in an oral tradition. These stories are a form of verbal art, like rhetoric (Weiss 1977) pitched to maintain the active interest of an audience, and novelty is essential to art in any form. Hence the powerful demand for novelty--but novelty within the narrative tradition and according to the dictates of an accepted model of the universe and the characters it contains--will also be felt in the telling of tales. Why tell or listen to endless stories of the cayman when the same message can be conveyed and even extended by using subsidiary symbols of different appearance, character, and associated behavior, such as the anteater, the tapir, or the anaconda? The same story is told: the same morals inculcated; the same theories expounded; but now with new and exciting imagery. Thus audience and teller interest is maintained according to a pattern of theme and variations that is both fulfilling and elaborating.

To descend into a world of popular North American imagery as bizarre, if not as earthy, as anything illustrated in this book yet more familiar as minor oddments in our common cultural baggage, one has only to look at the incredible proliferation of superhero characters in that most egalitarian segment of the popular press, comic books. Based on a similar Superman theme of honest opposition to crime and barbarity by a strong yet virtuous character, we now have an endless assortment: Superwoman, Superboy, Batman, Spiderman, Captain America. Although it is true that this proliferation is a special case of commercial interests playing on and feeding a central cultural myth by artfully inventing new characters who do fairly much the same thing, the desire for novelty that makes their success possible is not the creation of those interests. It is a part of the audience--any audience--although of course it is not above a little self-interested cultivation. Many of the characters in lowland South American myth, as well as their mutual redundancy, have their origin in the same desire, the desire for metaphorical novelty. Old forms permutate into new

ones, themselves destined to be replaced and amplified by others. This process entails a veritable succession of figures of speech as well as the objects of speech.

In addition to the aesthetic desire for novelty, religious reasons for generating both an endless set of characters and plural manifestations of each character may also be at work here. Therefore, even my amendment of the previously supposed unitary nature of many supernatural figures, like the jaguar, into a duality does not go far enough in accurately expressing the complexity and plasticity of these figures. Mythical reality will always be sloppier or more fluid than any analytical account of it precisely because of this metaphorical mode of growth and function. One can only echo Hunt's summation of the "pantheistic" aspect of Mesoamerican theogonies and apply it to the lower Central and South American cognate systems as well:

In their view, as in those of all pantheistic cultures, reality, nature, and experience were nothing but multiple manifestations of a single unity of being. God was *both* the one and the many. Thus the deities were but his multiple personifications, his partial unfoldings into perceptible experience. The partitioning of this experience into discrete units such as god A or god B is an artifice of iconography and analysis, not part of the core conception of the divinity. Since the divine reality was multiple, fluid, encompassing the whole, its aspects were changing images, dynamic, never frozen, but constantly being recreated, redefined. This fluidity was a culturally defined mystery of the nature of divinity itself. (1977:55-56)

Although this statement applies best to the complex civilizations both archaeological and historical that I have compared this tribal model to, it is also true that tribal symbolism is fluid, but for a different reason. There, rather than a sophisticated awareness of the one in the many, one sees a concern for many characters behaving according to one principle.

Yet for all those who are dissatisfied with the restating of chaos under the label of analysis, I offer this mind game in search of that principle. It provides structure, but structure that is self-consciously fragile. Like a ladder of glass it may help to life the interested student to a new level of both perplexity and understanding, but it will have shattered in the process. Let the ladders that succeed this one, preferably in the form of the Shipibo double chain of arrows, carry the student to higher levels than the House of the King Vulture, to where the sun shines in darkness.

An examination of a possible cosmologic model composed of these metaphorical figures underlying many disparate tribal mythologies in the tropical lowlands of South America east of the Andes reveals that from a biogenetic structuralist perspective mythical content is not just a function of mythical algebraics. Symbols like the Yellow Jaguar or the Subaquatic Dragon have a real content to those who enunciate them. Partly based on similar psychological responses to similar environments, and partly based on readily perceived behavioral or formal similarities between these animals and human beings, the animals are used as objective correlatives that express, on a different dimension, the tensions of a societal form based on a pervasive sexual division of labor while riven by the profound battle of the sexes that interdependence entails.

This model is not based on some kind of "Zen Marxism," as Murphy (1969:53) intimated Lévi-Strauss's seminal attempt was. Rather, to be equally puckish, the model is firmly rooted in a kind of "Hegelian Taoism." It translates strictly defined dyads, each pair representing dualistic manifestations of a single concept, into a continuum model based on the notion that life is death and death, life (Wilbert 1975a:169, on the Warao). This is done by postulating the asymmetrical interdependence of the chains of dyadic correlations and oppositions. Specifically, in the two key symbols of the model, the Jaguar-Dragon opposition, a positive and a negative manifestation of the Jaguar is created and opposed to a positive and a negative aspect of the Dragon. But instead of four static cells of a square, a dynamic system is constituted by weighting one element of each set of dyads; the Dragon's negative aspect is emphasized and contrasted with the equally stressed positive aspects of the Jaguar. The other two aspects of these two major figures, the positive and negative ones respectively, are to an extent equated and interpenetrate to keep the model in perpetual movement. This produces a continual process of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis that transforms, by the overlapping of the major figures' aspects, what might at first appear to be a static oppositional system into a dynamic scheme of endlessly ramifying transitive relations. In its most complex forms this world view approximates a sophisticated Manichaeism, for as Reichel-Dolmatoff specifies of the Kogi:

In order to guarantee the existence of Good it is necessary to foment Evil because if the latter should disappear--finding no justification for its existence--the principle of Good would disappear as well. It is deemed

necessary then that a person should occasionally commit sins which bear witness to the active existence of Evil. (1974:295-296)

The result of this cosmology is as self-contained and complex a world--one that spins off characters constantly to play on each other's ambiguities and fill in the process many uninhabited niches of the mind--as the ancient and resilient tropical rain forest that inspired it. This mythological mind world is a lush and exotic place, much more so than this arid and tedious description can convey, full of vibrant colors, pungent odors, and rotting insect carapaces iridescent against the dark mulch of thinly hidden desires and needs. Yet it is disciplined by a dualism so basic that its limits are only just beginning to be explored.



Notes

I. Of Mind Games and Models

1. I use *metaphor* as one aspect of synthesis, the tendency to unite disparate parts into a structural whole by subordinating certain elements to others that are deemed more important or central and that can be formulated as laws (Piaget 1970:7). One cannot build a structure based on the essentially historicist assumption that all bits of data are equivalent. *Analytical*, on the other hand, refers to the breaking down of some preexist-tent structure into its constituent parts for the purpose either of destroy-ing or of confirming it. Synthesis unites; analysis dissolves. Both are es-sential for any inquiry.

2. I use "style cycle" in the Kroeberian (1957) and Wölfflinian (1932) sense that visual styles evolve from the rudimentary and undifferentiated to the sophisticated and complex until a point of diminishing returns is reached ("pattern exhaustion") and solutions become too busy or extravagant. Then newer, simpler, and therefore stronger solutions take their place, and a new style cycle begins. These cycles can best be conceptualized as spirals rather than circles inasmuch as each new style that draws on the same cultural base builds on the debris of the old (Stent 1972) and forms new configurations even as it recapitulates the same developmental patterns.

3. Materialists, of course, can be as Cartesian in their thinking as idealists are, as Maquet (1971:5) shows in his strict dichotomy between object and subject. Hence his belief in the Possibility of "objective" rather than merely "intersubjective" analysis. Moreover in the materialists' view, the external world that the scientist, even the social scientist, dispassionately describes and analyzes, as if it were a sprig of coral, is naturally discontinuous: "The subject also has a direct experience of the world as discontinuous, made up of discrete entities" (1971:5).

4. I do not assert that structuralism is reducible to idealism, for as Stent (1972:92) points out, it actually synthesizes both materialism and idealism in important ways. The commitment to empirical reality does differ, however, in various brands of structuralism. Lévi-Strauss's structuralism has been criticized for its loose adherence to ethnographic facts (Thomas, Konenfeld, and Konenfeld 1976:148), whereas his students have generally paid more attention to the careful gathering of such facts (Dumont 1976:1). Yet the abstracted structures built out of the empirical data, being models, cannot be directly experienced. The only thing that can be experienced or observed is the output in the form of behavior, either in speech or action. It is at that point that discrepancies between the ideal and the real become relevant (Harris 1974).

5. See Kracke (1978a:4) for a sophisticated analogue of the biogenetic approach in the analysis of the social and psychological correlates of leadership in Tupi-Kagwahiv society.

6. Two examples from the literature:

> Social relationships, as they are felt, appear shallow and without any sense of permanence. (Weiss 1975:239, writing the River Campa)
>
> The attachment between individuals is not strong; there is almost no emotional involvement among Akuriyo, whatever the relationship. (Kloos 1977:121)

7. This is not to say that many insights, particularly those of Eliade, such as the necessity and disjunctive characteristics of a central place, a "center of the world" (1959:24, 37), or even his specific decodings of general symbols (such as the Dragon, a "paradigmatic figure of the marine monster, of the primoridal snake, symbol of the cosmic waters, of darkness, night, and death," 1959:48, or the World Tree, "the mode of being of the cosmos, and first of all in its capacity for endless regeneration," 1959:148, cannot be directly applied to the South American Indian lowland figures, for they can, and with surprisingly little modifications. Following Lévi-Strauss, Leach (1966), and other anthropological writers, my sparing use of Eliade stems rather from a distrust of the generality of his statements based on highly selected data. His students, particularly Luckert (1976), are more useful because they have a narrower focus. Only a closer and more sustained investigation of the construction and use of symbols in specific worldwide ethnographic contexts can rebuild what Eliade has attempted to the same elevated plane with which his analysis *starts*.

8. By stressing the importance of the figures of speech based on analogy, like simile and metaphor, I do not mean to imply that other rhetorical devices are absent. Indeed as Weiss (1977:179) shows for the River Campa, many additional devices are used, albeit sparingly, in South Amerindian discourse. Conceptually, however, the most significant of these figures are those based on analogy because these construct, rather

than merely embellish the mythical characters. But, as I indicated in my outline of devices, simile and metaphor are not enough; there is also kenning, although only the most sophisticated and specialized verbal traditions will regularly use kenning in speech. The master orators of the Warao have elevated this most indirect form of reference into a veritable secret language. Thus, for example, a narrative command to "imitate the undulating movements of snakes" can only be decoded by the *cognoscenti*. They know that it refers to the "snaking," or wriggling of a fishing line just below the surface of the water, and hence that it is a command to go on a fishing expedition (Wilbert 1975b:12)!

9. "Jaguar : fire : : toad : water" is standard structuralist notation for "jaguar is to fire as toad is to water." Subsequent equations make use of the symbols →, meaning "transformed into" and /, meaning "opposed to."

10. There are tales of human origin from a human body among South American tribal Indians, like the Campa-Nomatsiguenga myth of the origin of the various tribes of the region from the body of the demiurge *Manchacori*. From the head came the Spanish priests; from the backbone, the white man; from the hands, the Campa Ashaninca (River Campa). From the fleshy parts came the tribes that inhabit the lower river, like the Shipibo, and from the most central and vital spot, the intestines, came the Campa-Nomatsiguenga themselves (Shaver 1975:51). Yet this tale is still not a complete example of the cosmologic body concept, for it only organizes the dimension of human populations, not the rest of the environment including the natural and supernatural geography.

11. Although my use of the jungle as metaphor may seem a bit artificial, South Amerindians are also capable of viewing it as a condensed symbol of great extensivity as in the Barasana case (Hugh-Jones 1974:118), where succeeding generations are thought of as piling on top of one another and compressing themselves just like the leaves that fall to the forest floor.

12. Indeed there has been a historical development starting with a reliance on pure myth and folktale as represented by Propp's reliance on texts, to Lévi-Strauss's extension of that preoccupation with the received word to the word and action of ritual and custom, all as "explicit mythology." Lately there is an investigation going on of the deeply embedded "implicit mythology" inherent in the more prosaic matters of subsistence and residence patterns (Dumont 1976:2). The former tends to be verbalized, the latter not.

II. Myth, Cosmos, and Ceremony among the Shipibo

1. I have worked among the Shipibo-Conibo since 1969, making seven expeditions to them of from two to three months' duration each. I

have done both archaeological and ethnographic research with the principal focuses of investigation being art style, folklore, and material culture.

2. Weiss's (1975) success in eliciting Campa myths may be because he worked among the River Campa, who have comparatively greater contact with Western civilization than the Pajonal Campa from whom we have rather meager mythical materials. He was helped by a bilingual acculturated individual, Savaroháni (1975:226), who could intercede with more recalcitrant informants and helped to procure texts.

3. The *maëcahua*, Shipibo bird of evil omen, is the squirrel cuckoo (*Piaya cayana*). See Weiss for a nearly identical belief found among the River Campa, who believe this bird to be "a teacher of witchcraft" (1975:292).

4. This ubiquitous, gregarious fruit feeder is the crested oropendola (*Psarocluis decumanus*). The River Campa, southern neighbors of the Conibo, have a similar back ornament consisting of *paucar* (which they call generically "*tsóri*") feathers (Weiss 1975:297).

5. This episode cannot literally be true, for the Shipibo ceramic decorating brush is only some 7 cm. in length and formed of several human hairs wrapped onto a splint of bamboo. Obviously what the narrator means is that the girl was chastised by a female implement associated with the work she was supposed to be doing but was not.

6. Notice how long it takes to cook the tapir's stubbornly "raw" (i.e., excessively natural) flesh. An identical motif is found in the Siona story of the anaconda-seducer's similarly uncookable meat (E.J. Langdon 1978). The reason for this linkage is the identification of the tapir as the terrestrial form of the anaconda.

7. One of my informants asserted that this is a Campa word, the Shipibo generally admiring the Campa knowledge of the spirits.

8. This and the following myth refer to the complex of associated constellations in the southern heavens: the Hyades, the Pleiades, and Orion's Belt. These constellations are associated with one of the mythical brother's losing a leg, as Hugh-Jones has pointed out:

> The Pleiades and Orion are diachronically related since the Pleiades rise within a few days of Orion and announce the coming of the latter…[Lévi-Strauss] has further shown that in South American myth, Orion is frequently associated with either a man whose leg has been cut off or with the cut-off leg itself. (1974:124; see also Weiss 1975:488)

Witness the following Guianan Carib myth Roth recites:

> The twin sons of the Sun are hunting a female tapir. *Pia* [apparently the elder brother] now told *Makunaima* [the younger brother] to wheel round in front and drive the creature back to him, and as she passed, let fly a harpoon-arrow into her: the rope, however, got in the way of *Makunaima* as he was passing in front, and cut his leg off. On

> a clear night you can still see them up among the clouds; there is *Maipuri* [the tapir = the Hyades], there *Makunaima* [Pleiades], and below is his severed leg [Orion's Belt]. (1915:111)

The tapir is also the analogue of the cayman, the latter being one component of an anaconda-cayman-piranha Dragon.

9. In this myth we again see the equation of the tapir with the anaconda or the cayman, which is constantly swallowing heroes who therefore have to be cut free from its belly. Here, however, the tapir is a kind of inverted anaconda-cayman inasmuch as, instead of orally swallowing the hero as those creatures do, the hero enters the tapir anally. The connecting link between these inversions is the common lowland myth wherein the tapir is an ogre and "swallows" people by sucking them up its anus!

10. See Weiss (1975:482) for a discussion of the distribution of the chain-of-arrows motif as well as an illustration of the analogous Campa sky rope theme.

11. As a demonstration of the widespread appearance of this tropical forest myth, consider this virtually identical version from the Canelos Quichua Indians of the Ecuadorian montaña to the north:

> An older and a younger brother were trying to cross a great lagoon on top of a high hill. The older brother cried out, "*Apamama, Apamama*, carry us across," and a giant cayman came. The older brother told the younger brother to go first, but as usual he refused, so the older went across, with eyes closed. Then the cayman made the return voyage fro the younger. But just before landing on the shore the younger brother opened his eyes, saw the great cayman instead of a canoe, and shouted to be let off. The cayman turned; *crunch!* she snapped off his right leg. (This was terrible because a person's soul is in his right shinbone!) The brother was now without a leg, so he could not walk, and without a soul, which had been stolen by the cayman. The older brother fought back; he got five white termites and threw them into the lagoon, where they proceeded to drink up the water. Caymans appeared from all over and the *Runa* [people] killed them. Finally, in fear of losing their entire population, one giant cayman pointed to the guilty cayman, with the younger brother's leg-soul, and the Runa killed it. The younger brother put his leg back on, and off they went again. (Whitten 1976:53)

12. A *meraya* is current jungle Spanish argot for a medium, a kind of shaman who prognosticates rather than cures.

13. This pit viper is probably the fer-de-lance (*Bothrops jararaca*).

14. This large, chicken-sized black bird is prized as a game bird because of its great quantity of meat. The Shipibo call it *jasin*, the helmeted currasow (*Pauxi pauxi* or *Pauxi unicornis* or *mitu mitu*).

15. Note here that the excavation of the lizard, a small green monitor and an active burrower (*Cyclura macleavi*), is unsuccessful in capturing the Dragon. How could it be inasmuch as I have identified the lizard as a minor terrestrial aspect of the Dragon? A successful effort on the part of the lizard would require the Dragon to capture himself! As the model specifies, however, the Dragon is then successfully captured, and later killed, by the digging of an anomalous bird, anomalous because it is a bird that flies in thte air yet also digs in the earth, something birds are not expected to do. Birds are enemies of the Dragon.

16. Although difficult to identify, this beautiful bird is probably the green jay (*Cyanocorax yncas*). As I show later, poison, particularly fish poison, is stolen from the liver of Poison Anaconda, a major form of the Dragon. Inasmuch as marks--disfiguring blotches like those put on the face of the adulterous moon, another Dragon manifestation--are thought of as filth, the filth (menstrual blood) with which the moon is associated, the fact that the bird victor is here marked by the poison of the Dragon is perfectly expectable.

17. As in myth 2, ogres like people made desirable by their elegant face paint. The sexual connotations of the "devouring" that goes on in this myth are therefore apparent.

18. This Shipibo cannibal eagle is a clear analogue of the Piro cannibal hawk (Matteson 1951:37) and of the Campa one, as is illustrated by Weiss's account:

> The imposing cliff on the right side of the Ene river where the river cuts through a mountain ridge was at one time the residence of a large hawk, *Pakítsa*. This creature preyed on Campas passing by, carrying them off to its home and there devouring them. Beneath *Pakítsa's* house is a cave, said to be the passage through which *Pakítsa's* wife, whose form was human, went to draw water. *Pakítsa* was finally disposed of in the following manner: a number of Campas heaped up earth in the form of a canoe. *Pakítsa* swooped down and tried to lift what it took to be a canoe, but could not, and in the struggle the Campas broke its legs with their paddles. *Pakítsa* was then carried downriver a short distance and cremated on a large rock situated on the right side of the river. (1975:409)

Here a clay canoe is substituted for the clay person in the Shipibo myth. This was clearly an informant's oversight, for why would the sharp-eyed hawk be interested in an empty canoe? Another version directly replicates the Shipibo tale by having the Campas make an effigy of clay "dressed…like a Campa, and sent it downriver on a raft. The hawk swooped down and seized it, only to be beaten to death by the Campas with paddles" (Weiss 1975:411). The Campa tale contrasts with the Shipibo version by having the flying ogre cremated, a more appropriate fate for a celestial figure than the aquatic end of the Shipibo bird. Yet the

contrast between the fates of these two demons may be less than it appears since the River Campa use both disposal by cremation and water to put the soul of a demon-attacked person to rest lest that person also become a demon (Weiss 1975:435).

19. For example, Farabee says, "Wives are always very kindly treated; even when unfaithful they are not punished or driven away" (1922:101)--an indirect allusion to the relative impunity with which Shipibo women conduct their affairs; and Karsten says, "The women in general have much to say in important matters" (1964:185).

20. Indeed, Farabee reports that according to his Shipibo informants "they successfully repelled invasions attempted by the Inca in ancient times, but they were greatly impressed by their civilization and warfare. They think that the Inca will yet return to power in the Andes" (1922:96). While this expedition of the Inca seems mythical, it does show that Ucayali tribes have an awareness of the major power that once existed in the west.

21. At Shahuaya, for example, the more worldly Conibo scoffed at theh gullible piety of the Pajonal Campa settled at the same village, whom the missionaries kept singing hymns nearly night and day. This gullibility is not universal; Weiss (1975:493) has pointed out that the more sophisticated River Campa tend to make fun of missionary beliefs. An expedition I made in rough karst limestone topography illustrates the ecologically cirumscribed abilities of these populations. I took with me a mestizo, a Campa guide, and my Shipibo field assistant. The mestizo and I were naturally at a loss in the rugged terrain; the Shipibo, a superb boatman, was as clumsy as ourselves on the land. The Campa, who as Weiss (1975:239) points out, might well have drowned had he approached the Ucayali (the Shipibo's native territory), bounded ahead of us in the most extraordinary fashion, having to wait, completely composed, often for a half hour while the sweating, cursing, stumbling three of us caught up with him. Never have I had the specialized adaptations of different human cultures to nonoverlapping niches so forcefully pointed out.

22. Such marriages are rare nowadays because of apparently increasing Shipibo endogamic practices, but they are known to have happened even if most such unions were extremely brittle.

23. The Campa are famous for their skill at dodging arrows or catching them and shooting them back at their senders, an art they practice as a war game from childhood (Weiss 1975:240).

24. *Curaka*, although not a Shipibo word, is the common rural Peruvian Quechua-derived term for a chief. Chiefs had little power among Shipibo in the late 19th and early 20th century, so this refers just to an unusually charismatic leader of one village or group of compounds who used kinship ties to muster a force of about 30 warriors.

25. Cashibo lived in single communal huts that usually contained one extended family of less than 20 persons. These huts were placed far from the major tributaries as protection against Shipibo raids. The

Cashibo hut was one of the completely enclosed house types, thatched all the way to the ground, with but one door cut in the thatch and with a smoky interior to keep out the mosquitos (Wistrand-Robinson 1977: fig. 3). Thus the Shipibo warrior was able to enter the Cashibo hut directly, crashing through the dried and brittle thatch, its leaves exploding and crackling to add to the din produced by his cries to frighten the inhabitants inside.

26. This was indeed the Shipibo plan, for Cashibo war arrows are fearsome devices with multiple prongs, some facing backward. They are carved out of hard chonta palm, making them sharp and virtually unremovable. In one tale a wounded Shipibo warrior who can go no further demands that his helpers remove the arrow, knowing full well that he will die when it is yanked out. Reluctantly his friends comply and he expires on the spot. If a Shipibo attack failed to achieve complete surprise, it could easily turn into a rout because surviving Cashibo warriors were superior as fighters to the more modernly armed Shipibo (Galt 1870-1872). The Shipibo response to such an unpleasant situation was to scatter and try and find their way back to the landing individually, with the surviving Cashibo in hot pursuit. In contrast to the simplicity, indeed the aesthetic inferiority, of backwoods Panoan material culture compared to that of the mainstream Shipibo, Cashibo war arrows are much more complex and highly embellished than their equivalent Shipibo form. They are in fact the most elaborate domain of Cashibo material culture.

27. Outside of the Shipibo skirt, or *chitonte*, the *racote* was a major component of a traditional Shipibo woman's dress. It is still woven and worn by old women. A strip of cotton plain weave with typical geometric designs painted on it, the *racote* functioned as a shawl and, as in this instance, could also function as a baby carrier. The captured Cashibo children would be cried slung over the shoulders of a few of the "fiercer" Shipibo women who had voluntarily accompanied their husbands on the raid to help select the child captives and care for them on the journey back.

28. This story of one of the last Shipibo raids on the Cashibo was told to me in Shipibo by Eduardo in 1977. He is now about 70 years old. Older Shipibo do not calculate their age precisely, but by identifying the years of known events in his later life, it was possible to estimate his age. He heard of this raid when he was about 15; therefore the raid occurred around 1923. Another old man of near 75, who died in 1963, participated in a Cashibo raid when he was 19, so that raid can be set in 1907. The same series of dates can be calculated from the age of an old man in his late 70s who went on a raid near the turn of the century and who voluntarily ceased living during my stay in San Francisco in 1977. Thus one can bracket the end of active hostilities over much of the central Ucayali between 1900 and 1920.

29. The *tiati* is larger than another bamboo flute called the *paca* and has a deeper sound. Either flute is pierced in the upper node and intact in

the lower. They are played by holding them vertically below the mouth.

30. Unlike the Shipibo, they Cashibo did not have dogs to warn them of the approach of strangers, so the Shipibo were often successful in surprising Cashibo *malocas* if they attacked at first light. Neither side attacked at night because both feared the darkness and evil spirits who roam about then.

31. This is an onomatopoeic Shipibo word imitating the crackling sound of crushed arrow cane, which formed the shafts of both Cashibo and Shipibo arrows.

32. While this act of generosity would have been done with apparent sincerity, it entailed much bitterness on the part of the giver, feelings that would later surface in the context of a drinking bout. This was a matter of some economic importance for the warriors, for they frequently sold these children to the rural Peruvians for slaves. Some, chiefly the girls, they kept as brides or concubines.

33. The returning Shipibo warriors, still "angry" from the battle, would quaff the "hot" drink to vomit and purge the aggression from their bodies so that they could reenter Shipibo society, a society that values equanimity and emotional control and only allows personal aggression to surface in pattern drunkenness. Here a passive mask of social affability is coupled functionally with violent periodic cathartic release.

34. The Cashibo traditionally went naked save for a string belt. This scandalized the Shipibo, who always have been very prim about exposing their genitals.

35. Shipibo women cut their bangs at the eyebrows, so this halfway practice indicated that the recently captured Cashibo women were only half "civilized."

36. Note here the emphasis on removing the long or profuse head and facial hair from the male Cashibo captives. Beards are unusual in South Amerindian populations, partly because facial hair is grown only scantily or otherwise plucked out, but also because facial hair is regarded as being ugly and monkeylike. In this case the removal of the Cashibo hair also coincides with how the Shipibo viewed them in their oral tradition, as minor variants of the hairy Forest Ogres. Like so many Samsons they were being converted into civilized people by having their symbol of unconstrained sexuality cut and thereby controlled.

37. Notice how the Cashibo man is made to request that his relatives also be "saved" from their barbaric state by having them captured and brought to enjoy the same civilized life he is having with the Shipibo.

38. My male Shipibo workmen signaled this find with laughter and calls of "*Ŝhërvënanti! ŝhërvënanti!*" On inquiring I was told that they had found an artifact associated with their traditional female puberty ceremony, the *ani Ŝhrëati.* The men were sure of its identity, and all the women I showed the clay object to agreed that it was indeed a *ŝhërvënanti,* although covered with slightly different (incised) designs than the painted

decorations they applied to similar objects. Its close formal similarity to modern Shipibo *ŝhërvënanti* is shown in Raymond, DeBoer, and Roe (1975:51, fig. 29). Inquiring into the ethnographic context of the *ŝhërvënanti* led me to delve into Shipibo oral narrative and establish the contacts I later used in my research on mythology--a good example of the kind of fertile interaction between archaeology and ethnology possible in tee Peruvian montaña. Weber (1975:388) has since recovered a Conibo *ŝhërvënanti* in an archaeological context at Caimito, south of Cumancaya.

39. For a similar definition of ritual see Goldman:

> Ritual is in sense an esoteric language that uses actions as its symbols of meaning. From this point of view each ritual act may be considered a statement that dramatizes and, therefore, accents some principal cultural values and social patterns, while ritual structure, as a whole, may be expected to reveal modes of conceptualization that show less clearly in secular life. (1964:111)

and Weiss:

> Ritual will here be defined as any action or actions on the part of any of the members of a society directed toward or relating to what is understood in the cosmology to be the hidden reality, or any part of the world of appearances insofar as it is understood to possess hidden [supernatural] properties. (1975:510)

40. Indeed the Campa may once have had important rituals in the form of fire ritual (Weiss 1975:470).

41. The preparations for the *ani Ŝhrëati* were indeed onerous. Segundina mentioned that the pressing of the cane would begin about two weeks before the ceremony was held. (At the same time the *ŝhërvënanti* would also be made.) It takes *guarapo* ("sugarcane whiskey") about fifteen days to become fermented, but it is still a little sweet by then. After about twenty days, however, it is very strong. The cane juice is cooked for about two and a half hours and then decanted to a large *chomo* ("a painted ceramic jar with a resin-coated interior used to carry or store liquids"), where it will ferment naturally. It is covered with a plantain leaf to keep things from falling into it and to keep people from sampling it until the proper time comes. *Masato* takes only about three days to ferment. It is cooked and then some sweet potato (*karí*) is chewed and spit into the liquid, the enzymes in the woman's saliva hastening the fermentation process. A little *guarapo* is sometimes added to the *masato* to make it stronger. For a typical ceremony Segundina mentions a line of *chomos* comprising five of *masato* and six of *guarapo* (these are *chomo ani* standing 1 1/2 m. tall and even more around); Otelia and Inesia mentioned two of *masato* and eight of *guarapo*. Many textiles and much ceramics also had to

be made for the ceremony, keeping the women very busy weeks and sometimes months before the actual ceremony.

42. The men hold the *quënán* on their shoulders like *macanas* after they have carved them. They sing while doing so. Then they are handed over to the women to decorate them. As balsa wood is soft the *quënán* can be made quickly, one day before the ceremony (Segundina).

43. After drawing the designs on the *quënán* the women walk about carrying them on their shoulders just like the men. Singing, they then dance a *ronda* among themselves, forming a circle and holding hands. Then the leader (and any woman could be the leader) breaks the circle and pulls the group in a file behind her to a new area on the plaza. There the circle resumes itself in any direction, clockwise or counterclockwise (Otelia).

44. The mother of the girl searches for two assistants to hold the girl's arms during the operation. One important requirement of such women was that they be good singers for the songs that would accompany the ceremony. The mother had to give them a special *ŝhërvi* or *ŝhërbiana quënti,* a *quënti* ("cook pot") with broad designs painted on its interior (rather like what is done for modern *quëncha* or solid food bowls) as well as on its exterior. Ordinary cook pots are undecorated save for incisions and in their normally blackened condition present quite a contrast with the elegant painted serving ware. This *ŝhërvi quënti* had to be carried to them *before* the ceremony so it could be used during it to hold the water and *piri-piri* solution that would stanch the girl's bleeding and wash her bleeding vagina (Segundina).

45. Special coded signals would be sent out on the big two-tone signal gongs (*ani tempora*, the latter word being a clear cognate with the Spanish *tambor*) informing those close at hand of the preparations that were underway (Juan). The same drums would be used to call people to the actual ceremony itself.

46. The guests arrive blowing a *tiati*. All the groups that arrive at the *ani Ŝhrëati,* or any other fiesta for that matter, have at least one *tiati*. They blow—*Tiiiii!*—hence its name. After they have arrived they put it away and don't use it again. Its sound can be heard from a great distance away, and as a party passes by a village in their canoes they will sound the *tiati* to inform the villagers that they are going to a fiesta. When they arrive the father of the girl goes to the canoe landing, ostensibly to greet the guests, but his real purpose is to gauge the size and formidable qualities of the arriving party. If they are few and the hosts numerous he will call back, "don't worry, we can take them" (Segundina).

At the landing, if the guests can drink all the *masato* in the *quënpo* the host offers it to them in, they can keep it. Then the guests are led up the bluff to the village and seated on benches in the plaza, the women sitting on *cajuin* ("a large sleeping mat," of long filaments of *aguaje* tied together with string to form a diamond network pattern—different from the com-

mon sitting mat made of plaited palm leaves, the *pishin*) placed on the ground nearby. The father of the girl then goes to the line of uncapped *chomos* (the leaves having been taken off their mouths to show that the fiesta is underway) and ladles their contents into a *quënpo ani* ("a big, low bowl with constricted orifices and lacquered interior," a liquid food bowl), which he offers to each man on down the line. After the drink the guests fight with the hosts, but it is not a real fight; the two parties just wrestle with each other or, if *huino* are used, opponents will merely be pushed with it. The women also test their strength with their female counterparts. After the wrestling the parties drink (Segundina and Otelia).

47. Segundina asserted that the ceremony starts about 7:00 or 8:00 P.M. of the first night when everybody is drunk and that it lasts all night long. This is in accordance with Tessman (1928:206).

48. On the second day the girl dances a special dance in file with the other girls who are going to be initiated, each holding onto the *tari* of the man in front of her.

49. Normally it would not be necessary to tie up the girl, for she would be too inebriated to offer resistance. She would be placed on a special circumcision bench made principally of three balsa logs probably *Ochromia sp.* (like the *quënán*) because the wood is both soft and absorbent, in this case for the blood. Tessman's account of this bench is the most complete:

> On the next day the circumcision bench is built on a free spot near the houses. This bench is constructed out of logs and branches (ochroma, lagopus, topa). The branches are placed across two logs, and all of it is held together with wooden nails. On the spot where the girl's genitals will be, about in the middle of the bench, is left a hole. This bench (*moshó*) is coated with liquid and then allowed to dry again. In the afternoon and evening of this day, singing, drinking, and dancing take place. (1928:206, trans. mine)

Although I doubt that wooden nails were used to construct this bench, vine lashings being more in character, Karsten's (1964:187-188) account agrees fairly closely with Tessman's except that he adds that the bench was painted with *urucu* (*Bixa orellana*), a scarlet vegetable paint. Thus the "liquid" Tessman refers to may have been the *urucu*. Farabee (1922:85) adds the further note that the girl's legs were tied to two upright poles, presumably the legs of the bench.

50. Both Segundina and Otelia agreed that the *quënëa* of the *ani Ŝhrëati* were different from ordinary *quënëa* (and presumably those of the *Bëstëti Ŝhrëati*) in that they were not regular complex geometric designs but merely dots (*cháchá*) or little *x*s, the latter being painted on the body with *nanë*, whereas the former were painted all over the face. The paint is kept in a special bowl called the *nanë' ati*. It is later given as a present to the woman who does the operation.

51. On the second day, before the cutting, the girl is decorated with

all her ornaments, including *isosheta*, the prized monkey-teeth bracelets. She is also hung with trade bells, "the seed that sings" in Shipibo. Their tinkling sound is characteristic of the ceremony, and mothers treasure the bells to hand on to their daughters. At the same time she is adorned the girl is sung beautiful puberty rite songs telling her how pretty she is and that she will be made drunk and will feel nothing. Indeed many older women say they remember nothing of their own operation except the pain and inconvenience afterward.

52. While the girl is brought in with her two assistants, their husbands are playing music on their *pacas*. The girl first dances with the husbands, then is brought to where the women are who sing songs with her, then shuttled back to the men for more songs, and then finally back with the women once again (Segundina). While this is going on the girl is drinking out of a *quënpo ani* and getting progressively drunker (Otelia).

53. Tessman records this situation:

> The second day of the initiation rite begins with some of the older women, who understand the circumcision process, dressing and preparing for the actual cutting. In addition they give the girls a strong, fermented, sugar-based drink. This beverage they consume until they fall to the ground. In this condition they are carried to the circumcision bench by the older females and other female helpers who will do the cutting. The girl is then placed on the bench and cut. (1928:206, trans. mine)

54. Manuel's placing of the father near the girl somewhat contradicts Tessman's account:

> At this ceremony everybody takes part. The immediate participation in the circumcision, however, is done and observed only by the women; the men, boys and uninitiated girls are forbidden from viewing the operation. The women nevertheless explain to the men what takes place. (1928:205, trans. mine)

55. The beer is often ladled out of the huge *chomo* by an an-thropomorphic or zoomorphic little vessel, usually equipped with suspension holes near its rim; through these pass string tied to a long stick. The drink is then transferred to the individual *quënpos* of the drinkers or to a large communal *quënpo*. This class of vessel is interesting because it rep-resents the only class of representational ceramics used by the Shipibo (others, like the *joni chomo*, or face-neck *chomo*, although traditionally made, are always sold to tourists and never used within the tribe). The small vessels are modeled in the form of birds or animals like the manatee. Tessman talks about them:

> For drinking the women use beautiful clay molded mugs, which are decorated with birds, parrots, etc….These mugs are the property

> of the women, but they of course allow the men to drink out of theirs. The name of these mugs is *tonkonati*. Other vessels are also used, such as open clay bowls with three bands around them that are attached to a stick. Not all the women are capable of creating the mugs that have animal shapes on them, and this is why not all the women have one. (1928:206, trans. mine)

The little open bowl substituted for the *toncoati* (*tonkonati*) was probably a *quënpo vacu,* or small sized drinking cup. The special signify-cance of their realistic shape is seen in two special forms often used at *ani Ŝhrëati:* the *hoboshco,* and the *ŝhërvi toncoati*. The *hoboshco* was a hollow cup in the form of a phallus complete with testicles. When dipped into the capacious round *chomo* it would not be farfetched to see a symbolic act of intercourse. The *ŝhërvi toncoati* is a realistic vulva with the vaginal slit forming the opening. Here too the sexual symbolism is obvious.

56. The native herbal medicine *huástë,* or as it is commonly called, *piri-piri,* is a sedge (*Cyperus sp.*) grown in house gardens. It is boiled in this water and serves to stanch the flow of vaginal blood, help prevent infec-tion, and quickly heal the wounds inflicted by the bamboo knife. Its other uses include healing men's scalp cuts caused by the *huishate* knife (Girard 1958:244) and contraceptive purposes (Bergman 1974:127). Further, my informants affirmed that, washed into the shirt or *tari* of a recalcitrant son-in-law, it could induce him to reside matrilocally and help his bride's parents even if he didn't want to. It can also be used in much the same way as love magic or to make a former enemy a friend.

As to the operation itself, Karsten gives the fullest account:

> The operation is carried out by an old woman with the assistance of other women. The operating knife consists of a very sharp piece of split bamboo. This kind of bamboo is called *paca*, the knife itself being called *köntsö.* Several of these knives are held ready, stuck in a lump of clay, within reach of the operating woman. As to the extent of the operation there has been a diversity of opinion. Native infor-mants on this point are not quite trust worthy, and probably no white man has been a witness of the operation. The travelers Reich and Stegelmann state that only the hymen is severed from the labia minora so that the clitoris is set quite free. It would be most natural to assume that the "circumcision" in question consists only of this operation. Tessman, however, is positive that not only the hymen but also the labia and the clitoris of the girls are severed, which seems too cruel an operation. The blood is allowed to flow to the ground from the hole cut in the operation-bench. (1964:188)

Otelia also states that the *quënán* are used in conjunction with the bench to elevate and spread the thighs of the girl, allowing the surgeon better access to her vagina. The extent of the operation probably differed with the surgeon. My informants stated that there was a wide

disparity in skills and that the mother made it a point to search out the best available and paid her handsomely in pottery and other goods (as "gifts") for her services. Because Inesia, Segundina, and Otelia all said that something was buried, as Tessman's statement that the clitoris was in fact amputated (1928:206-207) would seem to corroborate, the more severe form of the operation may have occurred, Karsten notwithstanding.

57. Tessman's account agrees with this: "In the hut the girl is placed on a mat that has been prepared for her" (1928:207, trans. mine). The mat in question was a *cajuin*. As to the fate of the clitoris, Otelia agreed with Tessman (1928:207), although she volunteered the information independently by saying it was buried nearby. She added that this was to prevent animals like *ochiti* ("dogs") from eating it. In the case of multiple girls being operated on, Tessman states: "While the first girl is returned to the hut after the operation, the next initiate in line goes to the bench, and the others all follow as their turn comes" (1928:207, trans. mine).

58. Karsten:

> While the operations on the girls are going on, certain peculiar ceremonies are performed by the men on the open place in front of the operating bench….The men drink *guarapo*, and owing to the strong effects of this beverage they soon become intoxicated. At the same time the dancing, accompanied by chanting and the beating of drums, assumes a more and more ecstatic character. The men are wearing their customary festive attire. They carry *macanas* (a Quechua word)….At the beginning of the dance each dancer wears his sword on the right shoulder. Later on they are seen brandishing them during their movements, apparently menacing their fellow-dancers and behaving as if they were fighting them. In addition to the rest of his equipment each dancer wears at his back, hanging from a band, his famous scratching knife, the *wuisháte*, nowadays consisting of a small but very sharp crescent-shaped piece of iron. Formerly….the beak of a toucan, the point of which is as sharp as a nail, was used as a scratching instrument. When the excitement reaches its peak, the sham fight seems to develop into a real fight between the men taking part in the dance. One of the dancers is suddenly seen to catch the Indian dancing in front of him by the neck with the forked end of his *macana*, pressing him down to the ground, whereupon he takes his *wuishate* and scratches him with it on the crown of the head, drawing a deep stroke from one side of the head to the other, so that the blood flows in streams. Other Indians are seen doing the same to those dancing in front of them….The most remarkable thing, however, is the strikingly good humor with which every Indian submits to this rude treatment. No one appears to feel offended, or tries to defend himself. The whole thing is evidently regarded as…an integral part of the feast (1964:189)

Farabee, although differing on the antecedent of the *huishati* (he thought it was a peccary tusk knife), depicted a very similar light-hearted picture:

> We examined a number of heads, and found that about one in four had scars, and some fellows had three or four. Scars are no disgrace, yet those who had none took it as a good joke on the other fellows, and pointed out the guilty ones, who took it all good naturedly. (1922:102)

The *huishati* is, in fact, the last recycling of an expended machete blade. It does not scratch; it slashes down to the bone. It is greatly feared and far from harmless. Juan's account in particular does not convey the amiable reconstructions of the above accounts. Karsten's later statement on the role of the women strikes a truer note:

> While the "fight" described above has been going on, the women have only been passive onlookers, but when the excitement reaches its height they suddenly join in the game, rush in among the dancing men and try to deprive them of their weapons in the way Indian women generally do when the men really show fight at their drinking-bouts….In such cases the women generally play the role of mediators. (1964:190)

59. The *ŝhërvënanti* was originally made by the mother with her child's anatomic proportions in mind. When Ibarista made an unusually small *ŝhërvënanti* she had at first made it bigger, then trimmed it off saying it was too big. She obviously had her daughter, Francisca, who was small for her age, in mind. The *ŝhërvënanti* was placed on the girl when she was in her mosquito netting after the operation. It was not inserted into the vagina but rather placed over it, the smaller side downward and the convex side inward, serving as a kind of ceramic bandage or cover for the vagina. Tessman mistakenly identified it as a stone (1928:207). It was secured in place by tying a string around the waist and passing another between the legs (Teolinda and Tessman 1928:207). The girl wore it night and day and only took it out when she had to urinate (Segundina and Karsten 1964:188). Karsten also suggests it was used to prevent the labia from growing together when they healed.

60. Segundina clarified this by pointing out that the girl cannot sit comfortably after the operation and the *quënán* help her to do so. Inside of her mosquito netting the girl is clothed, her skirt (*chitonte*), being put back on after the *ŝhërvënanti* is positioned. Despite some linguistic confusion (*ani* means large and *racoti* is a shawl) the following quote by Tessman applies: "The girl receives a large wraparound (*ani*) or a very large one

(*racoti*) for clothing. This should be worn so as to cover the loins and breasts of the girl" (1928:207, trans. mine).

61. The third day is a winding-down day, as more and more people leave when the supplies of masato and guarapo are exhausted. The girl remains under the care of her mother. She maintains her diet and sits quietly on her mat.

> The girl usually feels better again by the end of the festivities and then returns to the hut of her parents. There she helps her mother with chores around the house, and later on she is able to roam around freely. She is in no way restricted from being seen by other people in the village. (Tessman 1928:207, trans. mine)

The healing process takes a month, two months at most (Segundina and Tessman 1928:207). At this time the *ŝhërvënanti* is simply tossed onto the ring of refuse around the cleanly swept Shipibo plaza. The archaeological *ŝhërvënanti* from Cumancaya was also found in the refuse. The same fate awaits both the operation bench (Tessman 1928:207) and the *quënán* because they are now dirty and have served their purpose (Otelia). The girl's marriage may now take place.

62. The placement of the *Bëstëti Ŝhrëati* with respect to the *ani Ŝhrëati* may have been somewhat variable. Otelia asserted that the hair cutting took place after the clitoridectomy, whereas Segundina was of the opinion that it took place much before, when the child was very small, perhaps only 3 or 4 years old. The weight of opinion, however, was that it took place afterward. How much afterward is another matter, for José witnessed a hair cutting around 10:00 A.M. of the second day of *ani Ŝhrëati,* while the clitoridectomy occurred later that afternoon. Several more informants agreed with Manuel and Ibarista, however, that there was at least a year's interval between the two, that the *Bëstëti Ŝhrëati* followed the *ani Ŝhrëati*, and that the later ceremony was patterned after the earlier one. The actual hair cutting was done by the same old woman who had performed the clitoridectomy on the girl. Originally, it was also done with the same kind of bamboo knife, *paca köntsö*, but for decades past an ordinary pair of scissors obtained in trade was used. As the hair was combed forward and cut it was not allowed to fall on the ground but instead fell into a special flaring vessel called a *voate*, which had been made by the girl's mother and which was given as a present to the woman who performed the operation. So too was the old woman given the comb, *bohuëŝhëti*, which had been made for the ceremony. These combs are often made by men (for example, by a young man to give as a present to his sweetheart or betrothed). It was probably made in this case by the girl's father. The combs consist of slivers of wood wrapped in parallel to form the teeth of a comb by two horizontal sticks. The wrapping itself is an intricate design done in fine homespun and dyed cotton cloth. The mother

additionally presented at least one ball of homespun cotton thread to the old woman (Segundina).

63. The husband of the surgeon will have the first pick of the animals the father and mother of the girl have carefully raised as pets. The killing is usually done in the early morning of the second day, around 7:00 or 8:00 A.M., before the clitoridectomy (Segundina).

64. The owner of the fiesta and the previously arrived guests are in the big house. The new arrivals beat the overhanging thatch of the house with their *huino*. The owner, his relatives, and those who have already arrived rush out of the house and grab the flaring tips of the new arrival's *huino*, and the wrestling match beings (Manuel).

65. Others referred to this as a sort of corral or fence behind the animals, on which were draped the elaborately decorated and newly woven *chitonte*, *racote*, and *tari* the mother of the girl and her matrilineal kin had woven and decorated. This was a display of conspicuous consumption--as was the killing of the animals--meant to show off the industry, wealth, and skill of the women involved and--by extension--their daughters. The husbands of the surgeon and her helpers often had bad aim in killing the animals because by this time they were very drunk. Hence they often put arrows through the cloth rather than through the animals. In their unsteadiness they would also fill the pets with arrows without striking a vital spot. Then the animals would writhe on the ground, kicking up blood and dust in their futile struggles. Then the women would have to bludgeon the unfortunate beasts to death.

66. The five or so men from whom the women--their wives--have stolen the *pacas* are the same men who killed, or wounded, the animals. Up until this time they had dedicated themselves to making much of the music for the fiesta. None of the other men will carry *pacas*. The mother of the girl must also present ceramics she has made to these men (Otelia).

After the animals have been killed the men bring them and lay them on the big *cajuin* the father of the girl has made and which is now laid on the plaza. They lay the animals in a line for the guests to admire. Then the women cover them with *racotes* (for a slightly different version see Juan's account that follows). Then they make a special *ronda* of the animals and sing songs in which the beauty of the animals and the goodness of their flesh is praised. Only then do the women skin and butcher them, placing the meat in the special *yahuaiti quënti* (literally, "collared peccary cook pot") to cook it. Otelia asserted that anciently the interior of such *quënti* were painted with the same kind of simple, broad, geometric designs that are today painted on the similarly unmodified surface of *quëncha* ("solid food bowls"). In the *paranta quënti*, or plantain *quënti*, they boil the manioc or plantains to be eaten with the meat. The owners of the animals do not eat the meat, for they are sad; the animals were their pets. But the guests do partake, although by this time they have drunk so much *masato* and *guarapo* that they usually vomit up the meat anyway.

The quality of a fiesta was often judged on both the quantity of the drink and the amount of the meat provided, but these were not the only things mentioned. As in Juan's account people repeatedly note the beauty of the singing and dancing and the excitement of the fights as earmarks of a good fiesta.

67. The *maiti* in my collection has a tall central tail feather of a red macaw surrounded by a group of fine, quill-like white heron feathers and below that a ring of long black crested oropendola feathers. They are tied to a stick and form the only permanent part of the crown, being carefully sequestered in the house thatch out of the hands of children. The feather group is then inserted in a hollow circular crown made of split bamboo laths wrapped together by two parallel horizontal lines of string. On the top are stuck little yarn crosses, *pën-pën* ("butterfly" in Shipibo).

68. Juan's account is truer to the realities of Shipibo social structure than Manuel's, which portrayed the men very much in charge. Actually the *ani Ŝhrëati* is an affair of the women, particularly the mother of the girl and her matrilineal relatives. Their husbands are given the protocol duties of interacting with the men of the arriving groups and are therefore called the "owners" of the fiesta, but the real business of the fiesta is the clitoridectomy and that is the exclusive province of the women.

69. The *huino* is made of exceptionally hard *chonta* palm cortical wood beveled to an edge on both faces--a formidable weapon. When men are only moderately aroused they use the flat of the club like a paddle, but one can tell immediately that things are getting serious when the men swivel the clubs in their hands so that they strike with the blade of the club. A heavy *huino* used on edge could easily split a man's skull like a ripe melon. At this stage of the festival Juan is describing, things had clearly not gone that far.

70. The *tamaranti* was played between two files of women, who banged on it with their grinding stones, the same stones used to pulverize clay pellets for pottery or to grind the charred bark of a tree to make *mëi* ("cariapé temper") for the pottery. It was the big wooden trough (usually an old canoe) the women used to shred manioc for *masato* (see Lathrap 1970: pl. 65).

71. The association of the underworld with death and evil is a strong one in riverine Panoan culture, as the following quotation from Farabee indicates for the closely related Conibo: "They believe in an evil spirit, called *Urima*, who lives in the earth. All evils are attributed to his influence. They fear him, and refrain from mentioning his name, but address no petitions to him" (1922:84).

72. Tessman (1928:199-200) was confused when he stated that an Inca called *Yoashiko* gave roasted maize and other useful plants to the Shipibo-Conibo in their myths. On the contrary, as myth 10 shows, he does not give them willingly. Instead intermediary figures such as birds must wrest them from him.

73. Farabee defines him:

> The Conebo believe in a creator, who was once on earth when he made men, animals, plants, mountains, and valleys, but is now in the sky, from whence he watches the activities of men. He is called *Otcipapa*, or grandfather. They offer him neither homage nor devotion of any kind. (1922:84)

74. Farabee further notes a relationship between mankind and the moon: "The Shipibo worship the moon as mother of all men." Although the moon festivals he notes in the following sentence appear not to have been held strictly for its sake, there is no doubt, as I have mentioned for the *ani Ŝhrëati*, that the moon was an important "guest" at such festivities. As to his statement that "they have no worship of the sun" (1922:104), he may be correct in the public sense, as in a ceremony, but as we have already seen curing shamans invoke the sun in a ritual sense in their songs.

75. Harner identifies this plant:

> *Psychotria viridis*, containing the powerful hallucinogen N, N, dimethyltryptamine, has been identified as a [banisteriopsis] admixture regularly used by the…Cashinahua of Eastern Peru, who call it *nai kawa*….On the Río Ucayali in Eastern Peru, I found that the Shipibo-Conibo also add to ayahuasca the leaves of a botanically unidentified plant called *cawa*, which presumably is the *Psychotria* of the linguistically related Cashinahua. Carneiro also reports…that the neighboring and closely related Amahuaca Indians use *kawa* leaves as a strengthener. (1973:4)

76. To emphasize the power of the drug, Shipibo men relate stories of how mestizos have come to the settlement to drink *nishi* and have had to be tied to the house posts as they rave through the night, afflicted by very alarming visions.

77. The shaman uses other methods of curing as well. He will combine massage of the afflicted areas with strong tobacco smoke blown on the areas from his *shinítapon*, as I witnessed once when I had borrowed a shaman's old *tari*, heavy with his power, to trace its *quënëa*. The loan was for an afternoon after I promised the reluctant shaman that I would have my field assistant return it by late afternoon at the latest (it is significant that the shaman cannot be without his *tari* during the night, even now when he wears Western clothing). Halfway through the morning my assistant came rushing over pleading with me to return the *tari* because the spirits of the *tari* were afflicting him with nausea and stomach pains. We did so and the shaman treated him in the manner specified.

78. My data indicate at least a year for this period of apprenticeship, during which much herbal lore is accumulated. Because bewitching is a

private and hidden matter, in contrast to curing, which is public and visible, I was able to get little data on it.

79. Note that whereas the curing shaman smokes--and therefore "cooks"--his tobacco, the bewitching shaman drinks his "raw," mixed only with his own saliva.

80. The parallels between the dietary restrictions placed on evil shamans and those imposed on menstruating women and the girls who go through the *ani Ŝhrëati* should be obvious.

III. The Model

1. Sometimes good is located below the earth, but in such instances there is always a lower realm where evil is to be found, as with the River Campa:

> Beneath our earth two strata are distinguished. The stratum immediately below the earth is called *Kivínti*, inhabited by good spirits and into which the earth's river falls at *Ocitiríko* [east point]….The second subterranean stratum, presumably situated below *Kivínti*, but the Campas are somewhat vague on this point, is *Sharinkavéni*, the Campa Hell, the stronghold of demons, where the Lord of Demons, *Korioshpíri*, resides and presides. (Weiss 1975:255)

2. The lowest sphere of the Campa-Nomatsiguenga cosmos, two levels below the earth, is *Sharincabeni* (cognate with *Sharinkavéni* in n. 7), where, unlike the general pattern of South Amerindian Hades, it is hot; ardent fires burn perpetually; and the only food of the dead is burning coals (Shaver 1975:50). This shows Christian missionary influence. Otherwise this Hades is a typical underworld abode. There is no manioc beer there, indeed no vegetable food at all. It is shrouded in darkness without the light of either the sun or the stars. It is also the abode of evil spirits who had their origin there and from there visit the earth to wreak havoc. It is the miserable home of the unsuccessful souls cast down by the *Tsirontsiro*.

3. The Apinayé actually speak of a huge post that supports the world rather than a tree, but that it is carved out of the World Tree is indicated by the fact that it is alive and regenerates itself like the World Tree and defies the attempts of humanlike creatures to cut it down.

4. For another variant of this myth see Loriot and Hollenbach (1970:44-47). This myth is clearly related to a Machiguenga myth from the same culture area (Shaver 1975:52) in which a World Tree connected with darkness (the underworld aspect) lifts the people who have cut it down into the sky.

5. The World Tree does not cause the world flood in this particular myth. Rather that is one of its central functions cross-culturally within the

area. The flood is not a malicious act on its part but an act of passive revenge; the flood issues from its severed trunk.

6. The Pemón link one kind of noxious insectlike creature, the spider, with snakes. The venomous spider *akurik* invents venom, is the owner of it, and becomes the Master of Poisonous Snakes (Armellada and Napolitano 1975:259).

7. Weiss suggests an accidental homonymy between their morpheme to *kill* and the name of this particular frog demon, *Oánto*. That demon is described in the text itself as *Oantapinitátsiri* ("he who always killed") (personal communication 1980). It is here that the model can give a satisfactory reason for this puzzling association by taking into account the lowland-wide role of the frog as either the giant ogre or its miniature progeny. In that model, being the defender of Nature, the evil associations of the frog make this particular Campa piece of symbolism utterly appropriate. There is a way of reconciling the specific with the general here. Weiss states, "Perhaps we can explain the myth as a Campa etymological effort to explain the peculiar name of this species of frog in terms compatible with the general view of the Salientia in the South American tropical forest to which you refer" (personal communication 1980).

8. Powlison does not connect this story with the Guianan frog stories; instead he regards it as a European-introduced folktale. Yet the functions and attributes of the old witch, although specifically not identified as a frog, play the same role in this Yagua tale as the human transformation of the frog does elsewhere in the lowlands.

9. This cayman is related to the moon, as the following Warao mythical paraphrase hints: *Imanaidarotu* ("lord of the night")--in my system an analogue of the Caymaniac Moon Dragon--makes a Wooden Bride for *Jokojiarotu* ("lord of the sun") from the trunk of a *jobo* tree (Barral 1960:95-99).

10. Karsten (1964:54) cites a similar myth from the Toba that makes the further connection between the invasion of a young girls' body while she is bathing or menstruating for the first time by evil spirits in the from of snakes, who make her pregnant, and the similar invasion of the bodies of fish by the same evil spirits, or spirits of the dead. Hence women must abstain from eating fish for some time after a death. The same logic probably also explains the Shipibo food taboos they place on young girls undergoing their first-menstruation *ani Ŝhrëati* ceremony--that they cannot eat large fish.

11. This aquatic connection of women with death and fish poison, as well as the male Yellow Jaguar's opposition to such associations, is shown by a Tupi-Kagwahiv informant who "goes on from recounting the jaguar threat to his father telling him not to 'play with the little girls' when the fishpool was poisoned, or 'the fish won't die,' a reference to the taboo on sexual intercourse during *timbó* poisoning" (Kracke 1978a:261f.) If death

is an autoerotic act for females when self-inflicted, then males having intercourse with them will keep women from dying.

12. Armellada and Napolitano (1975:351, on the Piaroa) point out that a variant of the fishing of the first woman out of a deep pool or river is the hoisting of her out of a deep hole. Both entries into the dry masculine world show the Fish Woman's close connection with the subaquatic realm.

13. Kracke (personal communication 1980) notes that the Tupi-Kagwahiv regard dolphins as human and stress their playfulness. They are respected and not eaten under any circumstances. Further, dolphins are beautiful sirens that endanger men by luring them into the water.

14. There are also dolphin sorceresses. Recall the Shipibo belief that the small black (gray) dolphins are the effluvia of the Shipibo variant of the Fish Woman. The larger red dolphin follows the color code for the lowlands by being identified as male. It is he who is the principal threat to women as an aquatic seducer. Presumably the female dolphins can act as sirens for men, but I have no specific data on that function.

15. Other forms of the anaconda can also assume the role of the rainbow. For some lowland groups the rainbow is the electric eel (Lehmann-Nitsche 1919-1927, 28:230, 232). Among the River Campa the rainbow demon, *Oyéchari*, predictably lives in foul places along the rivers and brooks, but instead of appearing as an anaconda it takes the form of a giant catfish (*zungaro* in local Spanish) with longitudinal stripes along its body like the stripes on the Campa men's robes (Weiss 1975:287). The largest of these armor-headed catfish I have seen killed in Campa territory (also Shahuaya) was a huge *Brachyplatystoma filamentosa* over two meters long, but it is unknown if this is the species, among others, to which the River Campa refer here. As Weiss points out, ecological circumstances could be responsible for this switch: "Because the River Campa do associate the rainbow with a catfish-like demon, it could be argued that the Campa belief is an aberrant form of the rainbow-serpent concept, in a region where the anaconda does not occur" (1975:490). Similarly, the rainbow-anaconda can be associated with other aspects of the Dragon such as cayman and turtles--witness Whitten's summation of the dualistic master-mistress of the water spirits among the Canelos Quichua:

> *Sungui* is master of water spirits; he is *Yacu supai runa* and his wife is *Yacu supai huarmi*, water spirit's woman, or *Yacu mama*, the continuity of water life. *Sungui*, whether male or female manifestation, is dressed in a beautiful multicolor cloak representing the spectrum of the rainbow, with red predominant. He sits on a bancu which is either the cayman, *apamama*, or the large water turtle, *charapa*. *Sungui's* animal manifestation is the giant anaconda, which he uses as a canoe when traveling beneath the surface of a river and which itself spans the forest domain as a rainbow. (1976:38)

16. Excessive noise is also linked to excessive water and wind, as the following Warao story indicates. The father of a mythical woman (the Fish Woman) is a huge serpent. She warns her husband that he will swallow him. Of her father the Fish Woman says, "He comes like a hurricane; he always comes by here like a strong wind…that shakes the trees and batters the roof of the house." He comes to the accompaniment of lightning bolts and thunder (Armellada and Napolitano 1975:132-133). Rain and thunder are related to excessive noise in an even more transparent manner by the Canelos Quichua, who have a class of aquatic spirit, from the domain of the anaconda, that makes a terrible noise. It is the

Paccha supai, waterfall spirit, which comes from the river to frighten them during hunting trips to areas rich in large game. The *Paccha supai* walks amidst thunder, rain and darkness making a frightening, rhythmic noise, represented onomatopoeically as *tulús-durúng*, *tulús-durúng*. (Whitten 1976:61f.)

17. Other groups, like the Tupi-Gavião, also relate the anaconda to the underwater realm, the realm of the *Goñánéêc*, aquatic spirits (D. Moore, personal communication 1978).

18. Therefore when men want to seduce women they do with the anaconda what they did with the dolphin aquatic seducer; they kill it and use its skin, oil, teeth, brain, or vertebrae to attract women--and, as one might imagine, fish (Whitten 1976:80, on the Canelos Quichua).

19. Keeping in mind Hugh-Jones's (1974:145, on the Barasana) strictures about the duality of all these symbols, however, there are in reality *two* gourds, not just one. There may be a symmetry in symbols, but the weight given them is seldom equal. Thus among the Barasana the gourd that is female is mentioned far more often than the gourd that is male, indicating that this symbol, although dualistic, is heavily feminine in connotations.

20. There are always problems with the tapir's food. His excreted droppings are as unsuitable for human food as are the vomited carrion of vultures. Both foods are too "natural," being prepared without fire; yet their origin mirrors the above-below polarity of their spheres, the land-bound food coming from the anus and the sky-associated food from the mouth. Similarly, the (Black) Water Jaguar, like the tapir and unlike the Yellow Jaguar, brings fish to his human bride (Stone 1962:59, on the Talamanca).

21. Given the sexually ambivalent nature of the tapir it is not surprising that a Tupi-Kagwahiv informant's dream of male homosexual intercourse with a bisexual male shaman who can magically change his penis into a vagina leads in real life to luck in hunting and killing tapir (Kracke 1978a:222).

22. If white men are fished out of a lake (Weiss 1975:415), as piranhas

are further down in the lowlands, the Piaroa make a direct connection between piranhas and foreigners, believing the latter were descended from voracious piranha-children while the Piaroa themselves were descended from the benevolent sun (Wilbert 1966:66-71). The Apinayé take a similar tack, attributing the origin of white men to white fish and the origin of black men to black fish (Nimuendajú 1967:168).

23. Like the cayman or the anaconda, the jaguar can in areas where it is not found by replaced by a smaller form, the ocelot (*Leopardus pardalis*) (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1975:4, on the Guahibo = Cuiva). Normally when the jaguar is present the ocelot is ignored, as are the lesser jungle wildcats; but should the jaguar be absent these smaller forms take over most of its mythical functions. The same sort of replacement has been documented archaeologically for the South Coast of Peru, where the older and more formidable Chavín jaguar was replaced by a smaller indigenous wildcat, the fierce "jaguar" symbolism becoming somewhat domesticated in the process. One can also suggest that the importance of the puma in the Andes is a similar case of ecological replacement because the high mountains lie outside the jaguar's natural range. Obviously, the content of the symbolism is bound to change under such circumstances because the retiring puma is no match for the ferocious jaguar.

24. Like Lévi-Strauss, Reichel-Dolmatoff does not distinguish between the Yellow and Black Jaguar figures. Therefore he lumps all the jaguar's disparate associations together in one generalized jaguar figure to which he gives the Black Jaguar's traits: "The jaguar of the hallucinatory sphere, the jaguar-monster of Tukano tales, is a man's alter ego, now roaming free and untrammeled, and acting out his deepest desires and fears" (1975:132). Though this may be true of the Black Jaguar ogre, it is not true of the Yellow Jaguar, who stands for restraint and constraint--the rules of culture that restrict rather than liberate the libido.

25. The feminine association with death and the death-mimicking experience of taking drugs is reinforced by the Barasana affirmation that the Fish (anaconda) Woman created coca (Hugh-Jones 1974:281).

26. Weiss presents what seems to be anomalous information from the River Campa who, like the Shipibo and others (Powlison 1977:60, on the Yagua), distinguish between good and bad shamans but only link the jaguar with the evil shaman or witch doctor. The bad ones "are shamans reputed to have contact not with the good spirits but with jaguars, which are demons. It is believed that their souls become jaguars at night to attack people as they sleep" (Weiss 1975:245). In my view the River Campa appear to have collapsed a lowland distinction between Black and Yellow Jaguars into the negative connotations of just the Black Jaguar. Weiss states: "The major sub-category, that of the common spotted jaguar is simply called by the general species name [*manati*] in keeping with Campa linguistic practice (equation of category and major sub-category)" (personal communication 1980), while the Black jaguar is "the only large

feline given a special name…(cháonari)" (1975:302-303). While Weiss asserts that "the River Campas are well aware of the danger posed by any jaguar and do not make any color distinction in fearing them" (personal communication 1980), a black feline ogre turned to stone in the cleft of a cliff (1975:289) and the appearance of another jaguar demon out of a deep hole from which issues a brook (1975:265-266)--characteristic abodes of the Dragon-affiliated Black Jaguar elsewhere in the lowlands--at least admit of the possibility of a Black Jaguar figure as one of the influences on the formation of River Campa thought.

Indicative of another sort of Celestial Jaguar, which may have been regarded as more beneficent, and which I identify with the Yellow Jaguar, is Weiss's statement:

> I detected a slight ambivalence toward jaguars among the Campas, which might suggest that the big felines had a somewhat more honorable status among the Campas before missionary influence directed the Campas' reverence more exclusively toward the sky. The jaguar-shamans, who have no special name, may be survivors from a time when all shamans associated themselves more closely with jaguars. (1975:303f)

Last, one is given the important information that "there are jaguars (*maníti*) in the sky, among the *henókuati* ('sky-dwellers'), that are good rather than demonic" (1975:290), which is congruent with the model's good = celestial/terrestrial = bad equation.

27. The Black Jaguar plays much the same role in a Yagua myth (Powlison 1974:114-122). He is the fierce ogre who defeats a number of heroic workmen employed by a *patrón* and eats all their food until the *patrón* himself kills him, decapitating the head while the body runs back to its lair. The *patrón* follows the bloody trail until it arrives at a *dark hole* in the earth. The *patrón* and his helpers then enter the earth, the realm of *King Isabel*, whom Powlison thinks is a borrowed Western personage. Only his name is foreign; in reality King Isabel is the Dragon whose daughter the Black Jaguar has stolen. A huge spider monkey guards the way to the King's (Dragon's) lair. He defeats the various champions, as the Black Jaguar had earlier defeated them, and must also be killed by the *patrón*. Finally, underground, they find the "daughter of the King," which because he does not have a comparative perspective Powlison fails to recognize as the Fish Woman. The Dragon then allows the hero, who is really an analogue of the sun acting as culture hero, to marry his daughter but proposes impossible tests and finally pursues the fleeing couple trying to kill them. The orgreish Dragon is easily fooled and confused as in the Barasana myth (T. Langdon 1978) by a cloud of "smoke" (in this case talc powder) and finally blunders into a trap the daughter has set for him and dies. This myth, with undeniable acculturative elements, nevertheless

obeys the indigenous logic of weaving together Black Jaguar, Fish Woman, and Dragon (and in some other cases King Vulture Lord, another aspect of the same figure).

28. Schaller (personal communication 1979) has recently embarked on the first intensive and systematic study of the jaguar (in the Mato Grosso) and indicates that rarity may be the key variable in determining what form of the jaguar will be considered the fiercest: "The black is usually rare and mysterious, hence more ferocious. In one area of the Tocantins of Brazil, blacks are said to be the most abundant. And there the regular is considered the most ferocious."

29. As Reichel-Dolmatoff indicates, "the emphasis on vomiting as a means of ritual purification is of interest in this context; vomiting is noneating, the opposite of food intake, and in this sense it is an asexual attitude" (1975:106), vomiting being the opposite of "devouring," the typical attitude of the ogre.

30. The red moon in this association may be a reference to the moon being filled with menstrual blood, which in turn is identified with contagion and death.

31. Sometimes, as among the Tupi-Kagwahiv (Kracke 1978a:11), this perceived similarity between monkeys and humans leads to a taboo against the eating of monkey flesh, but normally there is enough demand based on protein insufficiency to make monkey flesh, along with birds, one of the staple forms of game in the tropical forest.

32. Marmosets (*Callithrix sp.*), the primitive lemurlike New World precursors of the monkeys, are morphologically linked to monkeys, and the Yagua (Powlison 1971-1972:78) give the same negative connotations to them. A *female* monkey (female = bad) lets her brothers who live inside a tall tree trunk (shades of the Dragon-in-the-Tree) kill her own husband. Then they engage in a cannibalistic feast in which they consume his flesh. Here again cannibalism as extreme anticultural activity is linked to monkeys (marmosets) as minor arboreal representatives of the Dragon.

33. The other mythologically important monkey in South America is the spider monkey (*Ateles ater*), the largest platyrrhine monkey and in its arboreal brachiating acrobatics, size, and ecological specialization of feeding from fruit located at the ends of branches, the New World equivalent of the Old World gibbon. Its impressive size; long, black hair; and large canines all make the spider monkey a good associate, and to some degree a substitute for, the Black Jaguar in lowland mythology. As the Urubu *Aé* figure shows, it has an underworld function (see also the Yagua *patrón*- Black Jaguar myth cited earlier).

34. On occasion the libidinous aspect of the monkey is coupled with its funny character, as when the thin and ugly monkey wins the heart of a heroine because he is the only one capable of making her laugh (Armellada and Napolitano 1975:255, on the Pemón).

35. The color code can take precedence over the zoological code as,

for example, when the monkey plays one of its few positive roles, it does so in Yarabara mythology (Wilbert 1958:61) because it is a *white* monkey rather than the usual negative black form. In this myth the white monkey receives the Sun Bird, captured by another bird sent from the elder of the Magical Twins (himself a transformation of the sun) and carefully wrapped in a mass of cotton string of clouds so as not to lose its fire. The cloud ball is thrown to earth, where the white monkey receives it in his hands, painstakingly unwraps the mysterious package filament by filament, and places the product in its basketry cage from whence it had been incautiously freed by the curiosity of the moon (the younger brother). Here the "white monkey" is clearly a humanoid culture hero whose anthropoid characteristics are stressed over its antihuman behavioral component because the white color carries all the positive connotations of the Yellow Jaguar, intermediary between man and sun, and the sun itself.

36. The Pajonal Campa (Varese 1968:130) appear anomalously to place the dog in a negative role, opposing mankind. This is so only because it is maltreated and has not been given its fair share of the game it has helped catch. This also explains the Mesoamerican-like association of the dog with death and the fact that in Pajonal Campa thought it receives the dead, like a guide (1968:130). Otherwise when treated justly the dog is both helper and defender of mankind.

37. One way out of the sun/moon anomaly is the Makiritare solution (Civrieux 1970:141-146) of having *both* the sun and the moon sired by the Father of the Sun and the Mother of the Water, a huge boa. Then the son of the sun, *Wanadi*, can become a culture hero who fulfills the sun's role on earth while the son of the boa, *Hui'io*, can represent the moon.

38. The world flood itself is caused by falling *black* tears of the star people, progeny of the moon's incestuous marriage with his bird sister, *Jilucu*. Thus the Canelos Quichua relate excessive celestial waters to the moon's incest (Whitten 1976:51). The stars themselves are actually the souls of the dead.

39. Weiss (personal communication 1980) interprets this reference as a postcontact analogy coincident with the introduction of nylon fishing line and metal hooks. I will point out, however, that modern imagery does not obviate ancient symbolism. I do not find it anomalous that a long, sinuous object connected with both water and fish (female symbols) should be treated as an "imported analogue" to the ogre's phallus with the same connections. Strange as it may sound, a modern hook and nylon line may indeed serve as *avataras* of the Dragon.

40. Because in River Campa thought the moon was a male with a serpent penis rather than a female who causes a male's penis to turn into a serpent, as in this Tacana myth, he rescues people from eating termite nests (Weiss 1975:268) by giving them the female crop of manioc rather than turning into the mother of termites as the penis does here.

41. In a River Campa myth (Weiss 1975:378-379) the niece and wife

of the moon, when pregnant by him, spits (his sperm?), which becomes all the demonic insects and snakes.

42. The transforming demiurge *Avíreri* of River Campa mythology (Weiss 1975:328) exhibits strong correspondences to the Shipibo tapir cycle (myths 7 and 8) and the theme of birds bathing in the blood of the Dragon (Weiss 1975:488, 501-502 for additional River Campa cases). Like the Shipibo tapir and the ever-more neotenic genipa trees, *Avíreri* can be followed by locating his ever-more neotenic fields of corn. *Avíreri*, or rather, his grandson *Kíri*, with whom he is identified (see 1975:521), dies in a female way like the Shipibo tapir, through a kind of suicide in which he advises humans to kill him by driving a spike through his head and body into the ground. They do so, and *Kíri* is converted into the spiny kiri palm. Like the Shipibo genipa tree this palm serves as an analogue of the World Tree as spines are its natural defense. The spines are produced by the vulture, like the tapir another companion or aspect of the Dragon, who wipes his arse on the tree trunk. This parallels the anal symbolism of the Shipibo tapir cycle with its trees growing from the excrement of the tapir. Then, in a passage clearly a variant of the bathing theme:

> His blood forms a lake, and at his bidding birds came to bathe therein. Some of the birds, including all the sacred birds, bathe only once in the blood and emerge with beautiful plumage. But others, including the demonic birds, are greedy, not satisfied with their good looks after bathing once, and bathe again, emerging with ugly plumage. (1975:328)

Thus we have an indirect form of the World Tree causing the basic differentiation between good and bad birds based on their greed or circumspection.

43. In River Campa mythology, before ascending into the sky the sun transforms into animals a number of creatures that are his enemies, but being just, he does so only as a punishment for their wrongs. Elsewhere in the lowlands these sun-opposed creatures, all associated with the Dragon and the moon, are: the tapir, for his disobedience in refusing to accompany the sun into heaven and his oral greed (Weiss 1975:394); the porcupine, for his warlike tendencies, and his metonymic similarity to the feminine World Tree and its spines (although the River Campa liken his quills to arrows--Weiss 1975:396); the sloth, also for his warlike tendencies--an anomaly; the wasp, likewise and not an anomaly; and fish, for their cannibalism, like the cannibal moon with which they are associated (1975:390).

> The "anomaly" of the sloth may be clarified in another myth, that of Pleiades and Orion, which incorporates the same episodes (p. 405). Porcupine and Sloth failed to climb the sky-rope, were cast down and transformed, because the former lacked strength and the latter

was too slow, so that they could not ascend the sky-rope quickly enough while there was still time: the sky-rope was a test that only the "best" could pass. In addition, the sloth's upside-down posture is associated with falling (p. 396). (personal communication 1980)

44. An alternative to having the sun swalloed by a woman is to employ another womb symbol, having it hidden in a string bag (Garcia 1971:92-93, on the Warao).

45. Weiss (personal communication 1980) notes that "hummingbirds are sacred birds probably because of their perceived beauty and ability to hover in the air--there is also an association with the sacred tobacco plants, whose flowers they visit. Their dark plumage is recognized as part of their beauty…. The one exception is the demonic hummingbird *tsííanti*, consisting of all species that are *kamára(ri)* (i.e., tawny) in color." Yet *kamára(ri)* is elsewhere called a "drab brown" (1975:284). This highlights a subsidiary rule of the model: Bright colors generally are good whereas dark colors are evil. Yet, where dark colors are brilliant or shiny, the shiny versus dull or drab contrast becomes the predominant one; shiny being associated with good and dull with evil. Thus it is that a shiny, iridescent black can still be a symbol of good, as where the Canelos Quichua associate it with the life force (Whitten 1976:39).

46. Powlison mistakenly identifies the ruler of the vultures as a "condor" rather than the lowland king vulture it undoubtedly was.

47. The vulture, through his connection with thunder and its underworld affiliations, does have an indirect relationship with the underworld and din. This is later reconfirmed by its location in the night sky despite its being a diurnal form. An Apinayé myth states that Thunder is like a man; he lives in the sky and is painted black like storm clouds. Thus he is linked to the Black Thunder Jaguars and to the night realm. While the sun's messengers and helpers are yellow eagles, Thunder's companions are black vultures and their ruler is the king vulture (Nimuendajú 1967:185).

IV. The Zygote Quickens

1. A minor ethnographic detail is that the word *peque-peque* is an onomatopoeic word for the Briggs and Stratton engine itself and only by extension for the boat it propels, though in current usage the two are jointly identified by the term.

2. This aquatic picture of the underworld is even preserved in an acculturating context. One Yagua Christianized informant, for example, stated that "in back of the house of God there is a deep hole where all the bad ones are deposited when they die. He referred to this place as 'the lake'" (Powlison 1977:60, trans. mine). This association confirms the underworld = bad/good = celestial heaven equation of the aboriginal model as well as the aquatic aspects of the subterrestrial realm.

3. Some authorities might consider this sketch alien to the viewpoints of their informants in single-cultural systems (Weiss, personal communication 1980). Yet the goal of my analysis is not an "emic" reconstruction (in the "participant's" sense of that term), but an etic (observer's) one, because it is meant for cross-cultural comparison. If, as I believe it can, my system decodes many otherwise inexplicable or apparently idiosyncratic bits of mythical symbolism and provides a skeleton for their interrelation, then it will have succeeded.

4. As Lyon (1979:100) notes, these identifications make Cayman B the earliest female depiction in Peruvian art and the Tello Obelisk a clear prototype for later styles--such as the Yaya-Mama style, a Pre-Pucara style from the Titicaca Basin--that juxtaposes male = female depictions on opposite sides of a stela.

5. Yet Lathrap in his summary comes much closer to my system than these discrepancies might indicate:

> The gifts of the great cayman of the sky are seedcrops, while the gifts of the great cayman of the water and the underworld are root crops cultivated by cuttings from their underground organs…the gifts of the sky cayman, *aji* and the bottle gourd, are also classically of the house garden, while the gifts of the great cayman of the water and underworld, manioc and achira, are definitely crops of the *chacra*. (1977:734)

6. Both Lyon (1979:100) and I (Roe 1978a:23) have independently identified this figure (Figure 15) as a female. My identification comes from the inverted *U*-shaped continuous mouth band with canines that makes up the central part of the "sash" ending in the snake heads of the loin cloth. The mouth on this loin cloth is equipped with crossed fangs and serrated teeth as befits its function. In contrast, the male aspect of this super-natural, Figure 16, lacks this mouth as well as the "breasts."

7. Luckert connects these depictions with a *Kulturkreise*-like historical reconstruction of the displacement of the "megalithic" agriculturalist's serpent cults (1976:27) by a later hunter-society celestial jaguar cult (1976:24). Although the jaguar does seem to get more prominent and the Dragon more veiled in Mesoamerican religious systems as time progresses, I discount such a theory because the model requires *both* figures to be present from the beginning, although a shift in popularity between the figures could and probably did occur.

8. As far as the general properties of the model are concerned, the rattler and the anaconda are the same; they have the same function. The rattler displaces the anaconda simply for ecological reasons, the big constrictor not being found in this area. Otherwise the underground, aquatic, and feminine functions of "serpents" remains the same between South and Central America.

9. There does seem to be one exception to this identification, and that

is the "flayed pelt" (Joralemon 1971:35, fig. 90) with pelage markings (star patterns) on it. An analogue of the later "starry night" Black Jaguar pelt, this is surely a jaguar and not a Dragon. The difference is small, however, inasmuch as the Black Jaguar is an aspect of the Subaquatic Dragon.

10. This is admittedly a difficult decision because Grove's equating of the bird-man with the Mayan *Moan* bird is attractive. Owls are naturalistically depicted elsewhere in Olmec art from the same caves--as in Painting I-E (Grove 1970:15, fig. 9).

11. I am not the only one to use tropical forest data to decode the iconography of Moche art. For example Benson stresses the shamanistic role of this protector status and uses a tropical forest analogy of a stone snuff container from the Sucurujú, Río Trombetas region of Brazil (1947:23).

12. A similar figure is shown emerging from a cluster of the feminine underworld crop of manioc (Sawyer 1966:56, fig. 76); but his headdress is different, and in this style even minor differences in headdress or tunic forms signal a different supernatural. The model suggests that such a supernatural might be the Black Jaguar.



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